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ABSTRACT

This report is a staff review of an evaluation, conducted by the Carrera Consulting Group, of Project ASSIST (Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer), a program designed to facilitate the transfer of students at California community colleges to California State University and the University of California by providing electronic distribution of articulation agreements, basic campus information, and information on student transfer progress. A brief introductory section presents some background information and highlights some staff comments on the current evaluation. The five chapters of the evaluation report include: (1) introductory background and methodology information; (2) a summary of California public policy on transfer and articulation; (3) a review of the governance of Project ASSIST; (4) an assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the project; and (5) comments on the project's use of technology. The two appendixes to the report contain detailed compilations of the survey results, and a draft summary of the project's mission, vision, goals, and objectives. Appended to the report is a statement of membership, functions, and operations of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, and a list of other available reports. (CH)

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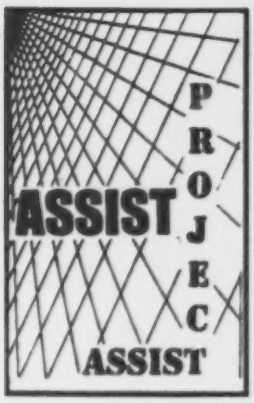

PROJECT ASSIST (Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer)

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

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Summary

In fall 1995, California Community Colleges Chancellor David Mertes and Joe Dolphin, then-chair of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, requested that the California Postsecondary Education Commission conduct an evaluation of Project ASSIST (Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Transfer). In December 1995, the Carrera Consulting Group was retained by the Commission to conduct the evaluation of Project ASSIST. The Carrera Consulting Group, with Stan Anderson serving as the principle consultant, has completed and submitted the final report of its evaluation of Project ASSIST.

This item contains the final Project ASSIST report, which is included in the appendix, and incorporates staff comments covering selected findings and recommendations from the evaluation. It also summarizes actions taken by the ASSIST Board of Directors in response to the evaluation. Staff comments highlight the potential for Project ASSIST to be developed as an official repository of articulation information serving all colleges and community college students in the state.

The Commission received this report at its meeting on December 16, 1996. Additional copies of the report may be obtained from the Commission at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, California 95814-2938; telephone (916) 445-7933. This report is available on the Internet; please visit the Commission's home page at www.cpec.ca.gov for further information. Questions about the substance of the report may be directed to Charles A. Ratliff, deputy director of the Commission, at (916) 322-8023, or from Kevin Woolfork, policy analyst of the Commission, at (916) 322-8004.

PROJECT ASSIST
(Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer)

Staff Comments on the Final Evaluation Report Prepared by the Carrera Consulting Group

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION
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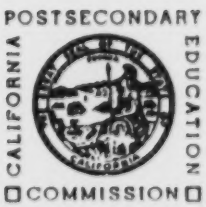

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Project ASSIST Evaluation

Background

Project ASSIST (Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer) began in 1985 as part of a pilot project to facilitate the transfer of California Community College students to the California State University and the University of California by providing electronic distribution of articulation agreements, basic campus information, and the ability to assess -- via electronic means -- student-transfer progress. Implementation problems hampered Project ASSIST during its first few years.

Between 1992 and 1995, the Project ASSIST Board of Directors were troubled by segmental dissension among Board members and disagreement about priorities for expanding the capabilities and the use of the system. California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) staff began attending Board meetings during the 1994-95 fiscal year and voiced concerns about the status of the project to the Department of Finance and the Legislative Analyst's Office. In late fall 1995, community college Chancellor David Mertes and Joe Dolphin, then-chair of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, requested that CPEC conduct an evaluation of Project ASSIST.

In December 1995, the Carrera Consulting Group was retained by the Commission to conduct the evaluation of Project ASSIST. The Carrera Consulting Group, with Stan Anderson serving as the principle consultant, has completed and submitted the final report of its evaluation of Project ASSIST. Earlier drafts of this report have been shared with Commission staff and with members of the Project ASSIST Board of Directors with a request for written feedback and recommendations. Many of the recommendations received have been incorporated in the final report, which is included in the appendix of this item.

Staff comments on the evaluation

Commission staff supported Project ASSIST at its inception as an intersegmental program in 1985. The prototype for Project ASSIST was UCI/ASSIST, an on-line informational tool developed by the University of California, Irvine. Though its potential was considered to be significant, the technology at the time was still unproven and contributed to an early focus on software and other technical issues.

In commissioning the evaluation, staff directed the Carrera Consulting Group to focus its attention on the strategic directions that Project ASSIST could take as it looked toward the future rather than delineating the pattern of problems faced and addressed by the ASSIST Coordinating Site (ACS) and its governing board in recent years. This direction was motivated by the staff's perception that Project ASSIST represents a viable intersegmental program that has been useful to counselors in the past and can be even more beneficial to both counselors and students

in the future. The evaluation design selected by the Carrera Group assured that information was gathered and analyzed from a broad cross-section of interested stakeholders and that both qualitative and quantitative data were included.

Previous evaluations

Two previous evaluations have been conducted of Project ASSIST, one each in 1988 and 1991. Both reaffirmed the contributions that the project could make to student and counselor access to articulation information if improvements were made in the project. Both also highlighted a similar set of problems to be addressed:

- a lack of vision and direction for the project;
- a lack of unified intersegmental leadership;
- varied levels of commitment and support from participating campuses;
- software, hardware, resources, data, and management problems; and
- failure to migrate from "out of the mainstream" to "mainstream" technology.

Continuation of these problems since 1991 directly contributed to the request that the Commission initiate a third evaluation of Project ASSIST, and also shaped the focus of this evaluation on future opportunities and constraints rather than documentation of past actions.

The Carrera evaluation

Analyses of data received from both project participants and non-participants about current operations of and future needs from Project ASSIST supported a series of nine findings and conclusions, summarized on pages iv to vii of the appended Carrera report. Staff call attention to and comment on several of the conclusions below:

- *The number of campuses participating in Project ASSIST is limited.*

Until 1995, only 22 community colleges, 12 CSU campuses, and eight UC campuses were participants in Project ASSIST. This low participation rate -- 20.7 percent of community colleges and 54.5 percent of CSU campuses -- was due in part to commitment and technical capacity requirements established by the ASSIST Coordinating Site (ACS) for participation. Differing system perspectives about associated costs to campuses, the utility of ASSIST components, and Coordinating Council policy also contributed to low participation rates.

Previous Commission reports on transfer (Commission reports 83-36, 85-15, 87-41, 88-38, and 96-4) have highlighted the importance of providing all community college students with accurate and timely information on course articulation and transferability in order to reduce the complexity associated with transfer, the number of repeated courses, and time required for students to complete their degree objectives. Although ASSIST offers an electronic means of providing such information, the low participation rate of public colleges and universities unduly constrains its usefulness. Efforts initiated by the ASSIST Board of Directors during the latter part of 1995 to expand the number of participating colleges is a step in the right direction.

- *Articulation agreement information maintained in ASSIST by baccalaureate institutions is incomplete and may be out of date.*

Project ASSIST is but one of several methods used by CSU and UC campuses to disseminate information about articulation agreements. Most often, printed copies of articulation agreements are the only documents accepted as official by individual campuses. Updates of the information maintained by ASSIST is slowed by its current mode of batch processing updates, the perception that it is not official, and the absence of participation by all colleges and universities. While this approach (paper records of articulation agreements) may have been adequate in the past, it will not continue to suffice in the future which will increasingly be characterized by rapid information exchange, significant demand for enrollment growth in community colleges, and growing necessity for collaboration between both public and independent postsecondary education institutions.

- *Currently an official database of articulation information does not exist in California.*

As noted above, each system and, in some cases, each campus prepares and distributes articulation information for its academic programs and courses. There is no single location that a counselor or student can go to obtain reliable information on articulation agreements and be assured that academic decisions based on that information will be honored at the baccalaureate institution to which the student transfers ultimately. Rather, coordination with each campus being considered is the safest, albeit most labor-intensive, course of action. This is at best curious given the heavy reliance on an effective transfer function contained within California's vaunted Master Plan for Higher Education.

In chapters two through five, the Carrera Group offers a total of 21 specific recommendations in the areas of (1) transfer and articulation policy [five recommendations]; (2) governance of Project ASSIST [five recommendations], (3) efficiency and effectiveness [four recommendations]; and (4) use of technology [seven recommendations]. Actions taken by the ASSIST Board of Directors at a September 1996 retreat and a subsequent board meeting in November 1996 are responsive to most of these recommendations. Those actions are summarized briefly in the next section.

Two themes run throughout the final report: (1) future improvements in ASSIST should have as one of their goals expanded use of ASSIST by students and counselors at all community college campuses and (2) the articulation database should be given the highest priority for improvement and ubiquitous access. As originally conceived, Project ASSIST had three co-equal components: (1) campus descriptive information; (2) articulation data; and (3) progress check, an electronic tool for conducting student transcript analysis.. Conclusions contained in this and previous evaluations indicate that the articulation data component is the most heavily used and widely supported component of Project ASSIST. Accordingly, staff supports the recommendation that "ACS staff should focus their efforts on expanding

the availability of the ASSIST articulation database to all students and counselors." (Page 18, Recommendation #2 of Carrera report.) Staff do not, however, support the recommendation that a transcript analysis tool not be included in ASSIST, although the current Progress Check component may not be the best tool that can be offered. Development of a replacement transcript analysis tool should be delayed until after development of more ubiquitous access to the articulation database is substantially underway.

Two recommendations offered by the Carrera Group are emphasized below because of their close relationship to the Commission's belief that there should be a central source within the State containing official articulation information that all students and counselors can rely on when developing transfer plans.

Recommendation: "At such time as the ASSIST articulation database is accessible for update in an on-line real-time mode, each segment should establish and enforce a policy that stipulates that every new articulation agreement shall be entered into the ASSIST articulation database on or before the date the agreement becomes official." (Page 5, Recommendation 5.)

Staff Comment: Policies and practices that seek to assure that every student has equal access to the latest and most accurate information regarding articulation agreements for transfer planning should be encouraged. No student should be particularly advantaged or disadvantaged in their transfer planning solely by virtue of the campus they attend and/or the emphasis given to transfer activities at that campus. The Commission believes that each system should embrace this recommendation and urge each of its campuses to take appropriate action.

Recommendation: "The ASSIST Board of Directors should direct the ACS staff to develop ways to focus their efforts on expanding the availability of the ASSIST articulation database to all students and counselors. The ASSIST Board of Directors should adopt this as their top priority and operational focus over the next few years...." (Page 19, Recommendation 2.)

Staff Comment: Staff note the thrust of this recommendation is to make the ASSIST articulation information available to more students and counselors. This is a shift in the prior emphasis on getting campus commitment to participate in the project to one that emphasizes user-friendly access to the information and active encouragement of its use by both students and counselors, irrespective of whether the campus is an official participant in the project. This recommended priority is also consistent with development of ASSIST as the official source of articulation information in the state.

ASSIST Board of Directors actions

Several of the problems and recommendations contained in the Carrera evaluation have been known by the Board of Directors for some time, particularly in the area of governance. The actions taken in 1995 to reconstitute the previous ASSIST

Coordinating Council as the ASSIST Board of Directors are consistent with many of the recommendations contained in chapter three of the evaluation report. In addition to reconstituting oversight of Project ASSIST, the board also undertook several other changes, including:

- creation of a permanent Technical Advisory Committee to assist the Board with planning and evaluation of technological aspects of ASSIST;
- creation of a Campus Advisory Committee to assure user input in resolving ASSIST issues;
- rotation of the chairmanship of the Board between system representatives; and
- adoption of provisions to resolve impasses and encourage more timely decisions.

The board resolved to seriously consider all recommendations made by the Carrera Group in its final report, although it stopped short of agreeing to accept all such recommendations. A board retreat was held in September 1996 to consider the findings and recommendations of the evaluation as well as to initiate strategic planning activities. During that retreat, consensus was developed over a preliminary vision and mission statement, project goals and priorities over the next three years, and specific objectives and strategic tasks associated with each goal.

On November 18, 1996, the board met to review and adopt a more refined version of its vision, mission statement and strategic plan for Project ASSIST. This revised strategic plan has been included in Appendix B of this item, replacing the preliminary plan included in the Carrera final report. In addition, the board reviewed and adopted a report from its Technical Advisory Committee containing a recommended strategy for migrating the ASSIST articulation database to a more contemporary software environment that better supports universal and ubiquitous access.

All but three of the major Carrera recommendations have been substantially addressed in the board's strategic plan and related actions. The first exception -- linking budget recommendations directly to goals in the strategic plan -- was deferred until after adoption of a strategic plan. The board expects to address this issue as working procedures for implementing its strategic plan are refined. The second exception -- identifying new measures (other than process or workload) to assess the effectiveness of ASSIST -- will be addressed as the board refines its strategic plan. The final exception -- eliminating support for the Progress Check component of ASSIST -- remains unresolved. The board continues to believe that a transcript analysis tool should remain a component of the ASSIST vision but no decision has yet been made on the current Progress Check product other than it should not be a high priority for ACS staff over the next three years. Some consideration has been given to maintaining minimal service levels for Progress Check, on a fee-for-service basis, for those limited number of campuses now making use of it.

Summary Project ASSIST continues to remain a viable intersegmental program that has the potential to be an indispensable tool to transfer planning and the State's commitment to the transfer function. Although it experienced a tumultuous period during the 1994-95 fiscal year, all signs are that it will emerge as a stronger program with collaboration between the public systems stronger than it has ever been. The ASSIST Board of Directors has adopted a strategic plan, including a concise vision for the future that informs current planning and organizational efforts.

The consensus of the board to take necessary steps to establish ASSIST as the "official" repository of articulation information for the state should be encouraged and actively supported. By official, it is meant that only those articulation agreements posted with ASSIST shall be recognized and enforced. This will require a concerted effort by faculty at all public colleges and universities and both the support and encouragement of systemwide offices for each system. Neither the ACS staff nor the ASSIST Board of Directors can advance this concept without such support. Since not all students desire, or can obtain convenient access to, professional counselors or advisors, providing a central location where reliable information on course articulation and transferability can be obtained will empower such students to make better-informed decisions than they might otherwise.

More than 1.4 million Californians currently attend community colleges and at least 338,000 more people are expected to be seeking access in less than a decade. Many of them will aspire to transfer to a baccalaureate institution. Many more students can, and should, be encouraged to prepare themselves for eventual transfer, even if that is not their original educational objective. Project ASSIST provides an electronic means for assuring that all of these Californians have access to accurate and timely information to assist them in meeting their educational goals. The State should consider a direct appropriation in support of rapid expansion of ASSIST articulation information to all campuses and the students who attend them.

APPENDIX A

Evaluation of Project ASSIST Final Report

EVALUATION OF PROJECT ASSIST
FINAL REPORT

Presented to:

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California Postsecondary Education Commission
1301 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Presented by:

Carrera Consulting Group
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October 7, 1996

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction and Methodology

Carrera Consulting Group (CCG) has prepared the following evaluation of Project ASSIST. This executive summary presents key findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from our evaluation.

Between 1992 and 1995, questions were raised among the ASSIST Board of Directors about the Project's future as an intersegmental endeavor. Discussion centered around the purpose and role of ASSIST, the Project's governance, its progress, and its costs. Efforts to define and resolve issues have been and continue to be pursued aggressively by the Board and significant improvements have been implemented.

As one initiative to help identify and address strategic issues facing Project ASSIST, the Board of Directors authorized the California Postsecondary Education Commission to oversee the work of an outside consultant in completing a strategic program assessment. Carrera Consulting Group was selected to conduct the study in December, 1995 and began its work in late February, 1996.

Our assessment followed a traditional strategic program evaluation methodology including gathering basic data; analyzing information obtained; developing preliminary findings and conclusions; and preparing a report of recommendations. The study, which was completed between March and September, 1996, included:

- Personal or telephone interviews with members of the ASSIST Board of Directors and other key stakeholders including Articulation Officers, Transfer Center Directors and Counselors from community colleges and representatives from public baccalaureate institutions who are involved in articulation and the maintenance of information in ASSIST;

- Site visits to the ASSIST Coordination Site (ACS), Santa Barbara Community College, Cosumnes River Community College, the Los Rios Community College District, Sacramento State University and the University of California at Davis;

- Written surveys of UC and CSU Articulation Officers, and representatives from community colleges using and new to ASSIST including:

  - ASSIST Managers (Usually Articulation Officers or Transfer Center Directors),
  - Community College ASSIST technical support staff, and
  - Community College MIS Representatives;

- A telephone survey of community college Articulation Officers on campuses not using ASSIST;

- Telephone interviews with community college Counselors using ASSIST on-line;
- Presentation of preliminary findings and conclusions to the Board of Directors at their meeting in May, 1996;
- Preparation and delivery of a preliminary Draft Report of findings, conclusions, and recommendations in June, 1996;
- Participation in the Board's strategic planning meeting held in September, 1996; and
- Delivery of a preliminary draft report (June 19, 1996), a final draft report (August 15, 1996) and this final report.

As a strategic program evaluation, our assessment of Project ASSIST focuses on issues of vision, mission, goals and objectives. Our conclusions and recommendations are designed to help the Board make informed decisions and take appropriate action to assure ASSIST's success in the long run. Success, in this context, means achieving the results expected by the Board and other stakeholders.

History

Project ASSIST is an intersegmental endeavor which began in 1985 as part of a transfer center pilot project to encourage California Community College students to transfer to UC and CSU. The California legislature supported the establishment of transfer centers as a means to provide students easy access to information and services which would help them achieve their educational objectives efficiently and effectively. Project ASSIST represented a way for students and their counselors to access transfer information through an electronic medium, and thus complimented the transfer center initiative.

Project ASSIST's forerunner, UCI/ASSIST, was a product developed by the University of California, Irvine to be used by individual institutions to make articulation information available on-line to students and counselors. At the time of its adoption for use by Project ASSIST, the UCI product was essentially a prototype and had not been thoroughly debugged. As a result, in the Project's first few years of existence, the staff of the ASSIST Coordination Site (ACS), who were previously involved in the UCI/ASSIST development, were preoccupied with the process of debugging the product and addressing the technical issues related to its implementation on pilot campuses. At the same time, the part-time lay board (then the ASSIST Coordinating Council), knew little about the technicalities of the software and its implementation and, thus, focused on providing whatever support the ACS staff needed in their efforts to make the system viable. In this frenetic environment, strategic program analysis and planning was not a priority.

Subsequent to these early years, Project ASSIST continued to face a complex, tumultuous, and difficult environment which continued to focus the Board's and ACS

staff's attention on operational, rather than strategic issues. A significant contributor to this environment was the adverse reaction of many campuses when ASSIST failed to meet their initial expectations. Significant ASSIST staff effort was required to address these customers' concerns.

Evaluations of Project ASSIST were conducted in 1988 and 1991. Both studies acknowledged the potential of Project ASSIST and concluded that, with improvements, ASSIST could make substantial contributions to student and counselor access to articulation information. Both reviews also concluded that Project ASSIST:

- has suffered from a lack of vision and direction;
- has lacked unified intersegmental leadership;
- has had varying levels of commitment and support from participating campuses;
- was plagued by software, hardware, resources, data, and management problems; and
- has failed to migrate from "out of the mainstream" to "mainstream" technology.

The years between 1992 and 1995 were marked by dissension among the Board of Directors. During this time, expertise was added to the Board which raised its awareness of the technical design and operational aspects of Project ASSIST. This awareness led to challenges regarding the Project's purpose, costs and effectiveness. In particular, the California Community College Chancellor's Office expressed concerns about Project ASSIST's perceived emphasis on the Progress Check component and slow progress in expanding the use of the articulation database. The debate reached a crescendo in early 1995 when the Board was deactivated for a short time. After this brief respite, the Board reconvened, determined to resolve its differences.

During the past year the Board has been working diligently to address the issues raised in the previous formal evaluations as well as concerns expressed by stakeholders in recent years. Significant progress is being made. For example, in late 1995, the ASSIST Coordinating Council reconstituted itself into the ASSIST Board of Directors and instituted other changes including:

a) creating a permanent Technical Advisory Committee consisting of each system's chief information officer to provide better planning and evaluation for the technological dimensions of ASSIST;

b) creating a Campus Advisory Committee to ensure more user input and participation in resolving Project ASSIST issues;

c) rotating responsibility for chairing the Board to better balance intersegmental leadership; and

d) adopting provisions to resolve impasses and encourage better and more timely decisions.

In late 1995, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) drafted an ASSIST Software Development Framework for use in planning and controlling future system enhancements. The TAC has also drafted Technical Coordination Guidelines, a Project Proposal for ASSIST Version 3.4 (Articulation Subsystem Modifications) and an ASSIST Technology Plan for 1996-97.

In June, 1996, Carrera Consulting Group delivered a preliminary draft of this report to the ASSIST Board of Directors. A final draft was delivered in August.

In September, 1996, the Board of Directors achieved a major milestone in the history of Project ASSIST. In a two-day strategic planning retreat, the Board reached agreement on ASSIST's mission and vision. They also identified primary and secondary goals and set objectives toward their achievement. Results of the retreat are included in Appendix B to this report.

This significant accomplishment sets a course for the Project consistent in every way with the recommendations outlined in this and previous evaluations. **It is important to note that the Board's initiative to develop a strategic plan for Project ASSIST and the results of their planning efforts respond effectively to several of the primary recommendations outlined in this report. Thus, the reader should recognize that significant progress has already begun to address many important issues vital to ASSIST's future success.**

General agreement has been expressed among Board members during our evaluation that their initiatives and subsequent changes have already begun to improve decision making, information available to the Board, and intersegmental involvement in technology issues.

Findings and Conclusions

1. Although growing, after 10 years, the number of institutions participating in ASSIST is limited. Some CSU campuses do not participate and many community colleges do not participate. Over the years, ASSIST participation by community colleges has been limited for a variety reasons including, staff, funding and/or technology constraints. In 1995, ASSIST participating institutions included 22 community colleges, twelve CSU campuses and eight UC campuses. Most of these institutions had been participating for several years. In 1995, an open invitation was issued for community colleges wishing to become ASSIST participants. Thirty-six additional community colleges expressed an interest and commitment to meet the preparation requirements. Most of these campuses began to participate in 1996. Other campuses have expressed interest in participating in 1997.

2. Stakeholder perceptions of ASSIST include strong opinions of the Project's strengths and its weaknesses. Representatives from various ASSIST stakeholder groups responding to our surveys and interview questions pointed to many strengths and weaknesses ASSIST in their responses. All survey responses are included in the Appendix A to this report. Examples of strengths and weaknesses mentioned are presented below.

Examples of ASSIST Strengths Mentioned by Stakeholders

Counselors/Students

- On-line use of the ASSIST articulation database and Progress Check can help students prepare for meeting with their counselor/adviser and helps make the discussion more productive.
- On-line use of ASSIST by counselors can help them identify alternatives for students with unique transfer needs.

ASSIST Managers/Articulation Officers

- ASSIST allows articulation to be developed and maintained in a single database.
- ASSIST has helped to standardize many aspects of the articulation process, improving the process's efficiency.

Examples of ASSIST Weaknesses Mentioned by Stakeholders

Students/Counselors

- The ASSIST articulation database is not as current as hard copy available from the transfer center or campus Articulation Officer.
- ASSIST is most useful for native students. Many students, however, have taken courses at more than one institution. ASSIST software does not make it easy to toggle within the system to view articulation information from more than one institution.

ASSIST Managers/Articulation Officers

- Revelation software limits user friendliness and connectivity to other campus information systems.
- Inconsistent participation by receiving baccalaureate institutions results in varying degrees of data currency and completeness.

3. ASSIST's use as an on-line tool by students and counselors is limited. The official source of articulation agreement information remains paper copies of agreements kept up to date by campus Articulation Officers. ASSIST, as an automated, tool is currently used most extensively in the development and preparation of articulation agreements. Many respondents reported that ASSIST as an automated tool for referencing articulation agreements is currently of only limited use since the information in the database may not be complete or up to date. This is due to two system constraints.

4. First, **articulation agreement information maintained in ASSIST by baccalaureate institutions is incomplete.** Some institutions do no participate in ASSIST. Therefore, their articulation agreements may not be included in ASSIST's articulation database. Entering course-to-course and by major articulation agreements and other related information into the ASSIST articulation database is the responsibility of the receiving baccalaureate institution. This process relies on voluntary compliance of the four-year institution to keep the data up to date. Other priorities may conflict with ASSIST maintenance, resulting in the potential for data input delays or omission.

5. Second, **articulation agreement information maintained in ASSIST may be out-of-date due to the update process.** ASSIST is a distributed database. Each participating campus has its own copy housed in its own computer(s) and available for use either on individual computers or via networks. The ASSIST articulation database used at each campus is updated twice each year. Thus, agreements finalized during the periods between updates are generally not available on-line to users. Articulation information which does not make it to the update may miss a complete cycle before being added to the database.

6. The participating segments of higher education have never reached a formal agreement on the strategic purpose and role of ASSIST, the intersegmental endeavor. For any undertaking requiring intersegmental collaboration to succeed, each segment must hold a compelling interest in the outcomes. The desired outcomes for Project ASSIST have never been clearly established in legislation or public policy, or formally stated by the ASSIST Board of Directors. We believe the primary source of dissension among the Board has been the lack of a common vision to unite the segments in their pursuit of shared goals for ASSIST.

7. Stakeholders interviewed and surveyed universally support the concept of an official statewide comprehensive and up-to-date database of articulation information. It is clearly in the public's and the student's best interest for students in California's public higher education institutions to achieve their degree goals without unnecessarily taking or repeating courses. Only by ensuring that this circumstance is avoided whenever possible can the student and the state minimize the cost and time to degree for transfer students. The best way to avoid unnecessarily taking or repeating a course is for the prospective transfer student to be fully aware of what courses will or will not be accepted by their target baccalaureate institution. An easily accessible "official" electronic database of articulation information is only logical in today's technological environment.

"Official", in this context, goes beyond a source of articulation information which is "accurate" or "reliable". Rather, "official" means that the database is comprehensive and operational. If information is not in the database, then it is not in force. Further, the information which is provided is certified as accurate, up-to-date, and reliable.

8. Existing public policy clearly supports the need for a product like ASSIST which provides easy access to complete articulation information. The public policy statement which most clearly expresses the mandate for a product like ASSIST is included in the State's Education Code, Section 66734 which states:

"The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, with the cooperation of the Regents of the University of California and the Trustees of the California State University, shall ensure that all students are clearly and fully informed as to which community college courses and units are transferable and meet the general education and lower division major requirements of the California State University and the University of California."

9. Currently, an official statewide database of articulation information does not exist in California. Stakeholders interviewed and surveyed implied that, if such a database is to exist, ASSIST is the logical solution. Some who were involved in early discussions of ASSIST's purpose and potential stated that this was their expectation from Project ASSIST's inception. Others believe ASSIST currently fufills this need. However, as discussed earlier, limited institution participation, the database update process, and ASSIST's reliance on volunteerism among its participating institutions to keep the database complete and up-to-date effectively eliminates the system's potential for use as an official statewide authoritative source for all existing articulation agreements among institutions.

Recommendations

This section presents CCG's primary recommendations for Project ASSIST. Our full report includes both primary and secondary recommendations. Primary recommendations focus on those issues we believe to be critical to Project ASSIST's on-going viability. Secondary recommendations reflect our opinions about directions the Board should take regarding issues which we believe are important to the Project's success but are not critical to its survival.

We believe Project ASSIST has made a noteworthy contribution in its first ten years to increased awareness of articulation and access to articulation information. We also believe that, to remain viable in the future, Project ASSIST must play an even more significant role in supporting public policies encouraging efficient and effective student transfer in California. In the following recommendations we outline suggestions we believe will move the Board toward successfully assuming this important role.

Primary Recommendations

1. ASSIST should become the "official" statewide electronic repository for all articulation agreements among institutions in California's three segments of public higher education. In a formal strategic planning exercise, the ASSIST Board of Directors should create a vision for ASSIST which includes the development of an official electronic database of accurate and up-to-date articulation information which is easily accessible to all students contemplating transfer in their postsecondary educational plans. **(Accomplished during the Board's September, 1996 retreat)**

2. The ASSIST Board of Directors should develop a strategic plan which will provide the context within which the vision can become a reality. The strategic plan should include:

    - vision and mission statements;
    - an environmental assessment to identify external opportunities/challenges and internal strengths/challenges;
    - a delineation of the Project's core business responsibilities and key stakeholders;
    - priority issues to be addressed;
    - strategic goals, measurable objectives, strategies for achieving objectives, and mechanisms for monitoring performance; and
    - implementation plans specifying persons/groups responsible for specific outcomes/results.

3. As part of the larger strategic planning exercise, the ASSIST Board of Directors, should establish a written agreement (memorandum of understanding) which clearly delineates the agreed upon role and purpose of Project ASSIST. This memorandum, in combination with the complete strategic plan, should clearly describe the compelling interest(s) which have brought the segments together.

4. The ASSIST Board of Directors should draft a policy statement for adoption by each Segment's governing board stipulating that accurate and up-to-date articulation agreements and related course information will be maintained in ASSIST by each campus.

5. The ASSIST Board of Directors should determine the appropriate level of historical data to be maintained in the articulation database and the ACS should work with institutions as needed to help develop plans for building the database.

6. As implied in its draft Technology Plan, Project ASSIST efforts should shift away from installing individual campus software and hardware to accommodate a distributed database and toward developing a centralized database of all articulation agreements which can be accessed and used easily by students, counselors and others.

7. At such time as the ASSIST articulation database is accessible for update in an on-line real-time mode, each segment should establish and enforce a policy which stipulates that every new articulation agreement shall be entered into the ASSIST articulation database on or before the date the agreement becomes official.

8. The ASSIST Board of Directors should insist that staff budget recommendations are linked to goals in the strategic plan through detailed operational plans and that program and staff evaluations are based on success in achieving established measurable results/outcomes.

These key recommendations represent a major change in the direction of Project ASSIST. The most important result will be a comprehensive database of articulation information, easily accessible by anyone wishing to know about course transfer potential. The database should also be easily accessed through automated interfaces to facilitate campus use of the data to support a full range of student services, including educational planning and degree audit. We believe this official statewide database will be used extensively by both individuals and institutions for a variety of purposes from ad hoc searches for course-to-course information to developing educational plans and/or reviewing progress toward academic objectives. In this new environment, a new role for Project ASSIST will be to promote student and counselor use of the database and advise campuses on ways the information can be integrated with other data.

Our full report presents these and other findings and recommendations organized in the following Chapters:

- Chapter 1.0 – Introduction, presents a brief description of the background leading to the strategic assessment and the methodology used for our analyses.

- Chapter 2.0 -- Public Policy on Transfer and Articulation, presents our findings on the policy issues which should strongly influence the Board's vision for ASSIST.

- Chapter 3.0 -- Governance of Project ASSIST, presents suggestions for improving ASSIST's oversight and governance processes.

- Chapter 4.0 --ASSIST Efficiency and Effectiveness, presents our assessment of ASSIST based on data collected and stakeholder perceptions conveyed in interviews and survey responses.

- Chapter 5.0 -- ASSIST Use of Technology, presents an historical perspective of ASSIST's technological environment and suggests changes which may be pursued in building a centralized database of all articulation agreements which can be easily accessed by students and counselors.

Acknowledgments of individuals who helped in the completion of this strategic assessment and responses to stakeholder surveys are included in Appendix A.

CHAPTER 1.0
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

Carrera Consulting Group (CCG) has prepared the following evaluation of Project ASSIST. This executive summary presents key findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from our evaluation.

Between 1992 and 1995, questions were raised among the ASSIST Board of Directors about the Project's future as an intersegmental endeavor. Discussion centered around the purpose and role of ASSIST, the Project's governance, its progress, and its costs. Efforts to define and resolve issues have been and continue to be pursued aggressively by the Board and significant improvements have been implemented.

As one initiative to help identify and address strategic issues facing Project ASSIST, the Board of Directors authorized the California Postsecondary Education Commission to oversee the work of an outside consultant in completing a strategic program assessment. Carrera Consulting Group was selected to conduct the study in December, 1995 and began its work in late February, 1996.

1.2 Project Methodology

Our assessment followed a traditional strategic program evaluation methodology including gathering basic data; analyzing information obtained; developing preliminary findings and conclusions; and preparing a report of recommendations. The study, which was completed between March and September, 1996, included:

- Personal or telephone interviews with members of the ASSIST Board of Directors and other key stakeholders including Articulation Officers, Transfer Center Directors and Counselors from community colleges and representatives from public baccalaureate institutions who are involved in articulation and the maintenance of information in ASSIST;

- Site visits to the ASSIST Coordination Site (ACS), Santa Barbara Community College, Cosumnes River Community College, the Los Rios Community College District, Sacramento State University and the University of California at Davis;

- Written surveys of UC and CSU Articulation Officers, and representatives from community colleges using and new to ASSIST including:

  - ASSIST Managers (Usually Articulation Officers or Transfer Center Directors),
  - Community College ASSIST technical support staff, and
  - Community College MIS Representatives;

- A telephone survey of community college Articulation Officers on campuses not using ASSIST;

- Telephone interviews with community college Counselors using ASSIST on-line;
- Presentation of preliminary findings and conclusions to the Board of Directors at their meeting in May, 1996;
- Preparation and delivery of a preliminary Draft Report of findings, conclusions, and recommendations in June, 1996;
- Participation in the Board's strategic planning meeting held in September, 1996; and
- Delivery of a preliminary draft report (June, 1996), a final draft report (August, 1996) and this final report.

As a strategic program evaluation, our assessment of Project ASSIST focuses on issues of vision, mission, goals and objectives. Our conclusions and recommendations are designed to help the Boa:d make informed decisions and take appropriate action to assure ASSIST's success in the long run. Success, in this context, means achieving the results expected by the Board and other stakeholders.

CHAPTER 2.0
PUBLIC POLICY ON TRANSFER AND ARTICULATION

2.1 Introduction and Background

The State of California has long placed a high priority on the ability of students to transfer smoothly and easily from a community college to a baccalaureate level college or university. California's original Master Plan for Higher Education established transfer as a central tenet. Subsequent legislation has clarified this intent and even expanded the emphasis on transfer and articulation.[1]

We believe that the following generalizations (in italics) are important for understanding the statutory context for transfer in California and our recommendations for Project ASSIST's role in that process. These generalizations are followed by the actual language in California statutes.

Public policy in California is clear about the priority of community college transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions[2]:

> "Student matriculation from community colleges through the University of California and the California State University shall be recognized by the Governor, Legislature, and the governing boards of each of California's public postsecondary education segments as a central institutional priority..." (EC §66731)
>
> "It is the intent of the Legislature that the transfer function shall be a central institutional priority of all segments of higher education in California, and that the segments shall have as a fundamental policy and practice the maintenance of an effective transfer system" (EC §66722).

Public policy is clear that the transfer process should be easily understood, smooth and efficient from the students' standpoint:

> "It is the intent of the Legislature that the segments of higher education shall pursue the development of transfer agreement programs that specify the curricular requirements that must be met, and the level of achievement that must be attained, by community college students in order for those students to transfer to the campus, undergraduate college, or major of choice in the public four-year segments" (EC §66722.5);

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[1] Articulation as used in this report refers to "course articulation"--the development of formal written agreements that identify courses offered on a "sending" campus which are comparable to, or acceptable in lieu of, specific courses or requirements at a "receiving" campus (California Public and Independent Colleges and Universities, p. 1)

[2] EC = *Education Code*, 1995 Pamphlet edition. Unless noted otherwise, all EC citations below are subject to the following qualification: "No provision of this article shall apply to the University of California except to the extent that the Regents of the University of California, by resolution, make that provision applicable" EC §66744)

"The governing boards of each segment shall design, adopt, and implement policies intended to facilitate successful movement of students from community colleges through the University of California and the California State University" (EC §66732);

"The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, with the cooperation of the Regents of the University of California and the Trustees of the California State University, shall ensure that all students are clearly and fully informed as to which community college courses and units are transferable and meet the general education and lower division major requirements of the California State University and the University of California" (EC §66734);

The identification of a "common core curriculum" is mandated, whose completion "will satisfy lower division general education requirements at UC and CSU" (EC §66720-§66721).

Public policy is clear that articulation agreements should be extensive and easily referenced.

"The governing board of each public postsecondary education segment shall be accountable for the development and implementation of formal system-wide articulation agreements and transfer agreement programs, including those for general education or a transfer core curriculum and other appropriate procedures to support and enhance the transfer function" (EC §66738);

"Each department, school, and major in the University of California and the California State University shall develop, in conjunction with community college faculty in appropriate and associated departments, discipline-specific articulation agreements and transfer program agreements for those majors that have lower division prerequisites. ...Community college districts, in conjunction with the California State University and the University of California, shall develop discipline-based agreements with as many campuses of the two university segments as feasible, and no fewer than three University of California campuses and five California State University campuses. The development of these agreements shall be the mutual responsibility of all three segments..." (EC §66740).

While public policy is clear that articulation agreements should exist, the Education Code is silent on where they should be maintained and in what form.

Neither law, regulation, nor policy establishes any official, statewide repository for all existing articulation agreements. Each baccalaureate degree-granting university campus has primary responsibility for the accuracy and currency of its articulation agreements. Likewise, there is no requirement that articulation agreements be maintained in electronic form or that they be shared widely. The lack of clear public policy in this area has left Project ASSIST without clear authority from the State to serve as an official and comprehensive database for transfer information.

2.2 Study Conclusions

1. Public policy in California is clear that community college transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions should be a high priority.

2. Public policy is clear that articulation agreements should be extensive (though not necessarily universal) and those that officially exist should be easily accessible.

3. Numerous sources of information about articulation exist. These include paper copies maintained and provided to students by counselors, transfer centers and others; and electronic versions kept in the articulation database of Project ASSIST and other products. Except in one or two instances, the most complete, up-to-date and official source of articulation information for each institution resides in paper copies maintained by the school's Articulation Officer.

4. There is no single official database for all articulation agreements among public higher education institutions in California. Though generally thought to have this potential, the ASSIST articulation database is but one of several sources required to provide complete transfer information. The source of articulation information most commonly used to advise students remains binders of written articulation agreements provided to counselors by each institution's Articulation Officer. This status undermines Project ASSIST's credibility and limits its potential usefulness.

5. Students are poorly served by the current lack of an official, statewide reference source containing all existing articulation agreements among institutions in all three segments of public higher education.

2.3 Recommendations

1. The ASSIST Board of Directors should create a vision for ASSIST which includes the development of an official electronic corporate database of articulation information which is easily accessible to all students contemplating transfer in their postsecondary educational plans. **(Accomplished 9/96)**

2. The ASSIST Board of Directors, should establish a written agreement (memorandum of understanding) which designates ASSIST as the official, statewide electronic repository for all articulation agreements.

3. The ASSIST Board of Directors should draft a policy statement for adoption by each Segment's governing board stipulating that accurate and up-to-date articulation agreements and related course information will be maintained in ASSIST by each campus.

4. The ASSIST Board of Directors should determine the appropriate level of historical data to be maintained in the articulation database and the ACS should work with non-participating institutions to help develop plans for building the database.

5. At such time as the ASSIST articulation database is accessible for update in an on-line real-time mode, each segment should establish and enforce a policy which stipulates that every new articulation agreement shall be entered into the ASSIST articulation database on or before the date the agreement becomes official.

CHAPTER 3.0
GOVERNANCE OF PROJECT ASSIST

3.1 Introduction and Background

ASSIST began in 1983 as the brainchild of staff at the University of California, Irvine (UCI). It was originally conceived to be an easy to use system including campus information, articulation, and progress check capabilities with data maintained by the responsible institutions. Although there was no consideration at this early stage how such a concept might be implemented as a Statewide project, it was envisioned as having the potential for Statewide use. The project was funded in part by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), through a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. The WICHE articulation-transfer project focused on improving the flow of articulation and transfer information to potential transfer students and their advisers. UCI/ASSIST was designed to help students plan their academic careers and evaluate their progress in meeting academic goals. With the advent of inexpensive and more powerful personal computers, the staff saw the opportunity to dramatically improve students' ability to access and use articulation information.

The initial work on ASSIST was independent of the concern over articulation and transfer which was brewing in Sacramento. The legislature had become aware of statistics which indicated that the number of students transferring to UC had fallen significantly and that minority students were not transferring at a rate comparable to other community college students. Legislation passed in 1985 creating transfer centers in community colleges to aid students desiring entry into baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. Word of UCI's work on Project ASSIST reached the conversations in Sacramento and, without a great deal more assessment, ASSIST became a part of the transfer improvement solution. In 1985, Project ASSIST was funded as a part of a state-wide transfer center pilot project to improve community college transfer. Funds were allocated from each segment through budget control language and an ASSIST Coordinating Council was established.

ASSIST, the incomplete and untested software solution, was part of the effort to improve student access to articulation data state-wide. As stated in a 1991 evaluation of Project ASSIST by the American Institutes for Research (AIR): "During the initial days of the program, the architects of ASSIST operated on two understandable but erroneous assumptions: (a) that the information they needed to run the computer program would already be available and (b) that the information would exist in a format easily amenable to computerization." The 1991 AIR evaluation also states that in the early days an: "...undertested version of the software was provided to a group of largely nontechnical end-users, through a period of erratic software repairs and asystematic revisions..." It is fair to say that at the project's inception and throughout its first few years of existence, the ASSIST Coordinating Council and its staff were submersed in the challenges of simply implementing and maintaining ASSIST.

More important to the future of ASSIST than the challenges of implementing its technology was the fact that ASSIST was implemented as it was designed at UCI. The focus of implementation was on helping individual campuses set up an environment to use the product. If and how the participating campuses

would make the information available to students and counselors was left solely to each institution's discretion. Since there was no mandate for using ASSIST, this strategy was considered the best way to gain participating campuses' support for, and use of, ASSIST. Focus on campus participation has continued throughout ASSIST's history. Today, ASSIST's success is measured primarily in terms of the number of participating institutions. Although encouraged by Project ASSIST, counselor and student access to information in the ASSIST articulation database continues to be left up to each institution.

From its inception, a clear mandate for ASSIST was not expressed by the legislature and no clear vision has been articulated by the newly established ASSIST Coordinating Council. Although the Board began a process to develop formal goals, objectives, and strategies in 1991, these planning efforts were unsuccessful. Without a clear and mutually accepted vision and purpose for the Project, widely disparate program expectations, miscues, misunderstandings and misinterpretations occurred among representatives of the segments involved and between the ASSIST Coordinating Council (now Board of Directors) and the ASSIST Coordination Site. Obtaining unanimous concurrence on critical project decisions and direction in this environment was extremely difficult, resulting in many contentious and unproductive meetings. Tension within the Board has been reported throughout Project ASSIST's history.

Lack of a clear mandate, operational demands of organizing a highly complex technological project, and dealing with a difficult governance environment placed extreme pressure on the ASSIST Coordination Site staff. Over the years, they have often been placed in the untenable position of trying to interpret the debate among the members of the board. Staff actions based on these interpretations have led to the perception among some Board members that the staff were acting too independently, setting the program's direction outside of the bounds of the Board's guidance.

In an effort to address some of the issues outlined above, the ASSIST Coordinating Council reconstituted itself in 1995 into the ASSIST Board of Directors and instituted other changes including:

a) the creation of a permanent Technical Advisory Committee consisting of each system's chief information officer to provide better planning and evaluation for the technological dimensions of ASSIST;

b) the creation of a Campus Advisory Committee to ensure more user input and participation in resolving Project ASSIST issues;

c) rotation of responsibility for chairing the Board to better balance intersegmental leadership;

d) adopted provisions to resolve impasses and encourage better and more timely decisions; and

e) acquired the services of a consultant to conduct a strategic evaluation of Project ASSIST (this report presents the results of this evaluation).

In June, 1996, Carrera Consulting Group delivered a preliminary draft of this report to the ASSIST Board of Directors. A final draft was delivered in August.

In September, 1996, the Board of Directors achieved a major milestone in the history of Project ASSIST. In a two-day strategic planning retreat, the Board reached agreement on ASSIST's mission and vision. They also identified primary and secondary goals and set objectives toward their achievement. Results of the retreat are included in Appendix B to this report.

This significant accomplishment sets a course for the Project consistent in every way with the recommendations outlined in this and previous evaluations. **It is important to note that the Board's initiative to develop a strategic plan for Project ASSIST and the results of their planning efforts respond effectively to several of the primary recommendations outlined in this report. Thus, the reader should recognize that significant progress has already begun to address many important issues vital to ASSIST's future success.**

General agreement was expressed among Board members during our evaluation that these recent changes will improve decision making, information available to the Board, and intersegmental involvement in technology issues.

Several other issues were identified during our study related to the Board's processes and operations. These include:

- Historically, the Board has not insisted on tactical plans from the ASSIST Coordination Site (ACS) staff or periodic performance reports outlining progress against specific objectives. ACS staff have generally tried to interpret Board expectations and directives from input received during Board meetings held periodically.

- The Board of Directors does not follow formal meeting procedures/protocols in managing its business. Board meeting agenda items do not identify the type of action required for each item. Minutes from meeting to meeting do not reflect an issue/topic continuum.

- The Board does not select or formally evaluate the ACS Director.

3.2 Conclusions on ASSIST Governance

1. The segmental interdependencies required to encourage articulation and to make articulation data more easily accessible to students requires close collaboration among California's three segments of public higher education.

2. Effective governance systems for projects like ASSIST must fulfill at least four responsibilities: vision setting, long-term program planning, major policy decision-making, and overall program evaluation.

3. The Board of Directors has not developed and clearly articulated a long-term vision for Project ASSIST. For an intersegmental initiative to succeed, there must be a compelling interest by all segments in the outcomes of the initiative. Desired long-term outcomes of Project ASSIST have not been expressed in terms which garner the unqualified support of all three segments.

4. The ASSIST Board of Directors has not completed a strategic plan for Project Assist which would identify the Project's operating context, its challenges and opportunities, its goals and objectives, and a timeline to accomplish the tasks required to achieve the goals and objectives.

5. Among those state-level administrators interviewed, widespread agreement existed that the governance system of the ASSIST project from its inception until 1995 was seriously flawed.

6. There is general agreement among state-level administrators that changes in the ASSIST governance system adopted in 1995 by the three public segments have potential for greatly improving Board relations and governance effectiveness.

7. The Board has not established formal operating processes and procedures which ensure that the Board's expectations are clearly conveyed to the staff and progress toward meeting Board expectations is measured.

3.3 Recommendations for ASSIST Governance

1. The ASSIST Board of Directors should develop a strategic plan which will provide the context within which the vision recommended to be developed in Chapter 1.0 can become a reality. The strategic plan should include:

    - an environmental assessment to identify external opportunities/challenges and internal strengths/challenges;
    - a delineation of the Project's core business responsibilities and key stakeholders;
    - priority issues to be addressed;
    - strategic goals, measurable objectives, strategies for achieving objectives, and mechanisms for monitoring performance; and
    - implementation plans specifying persons/groups responsible for specific outcomes/results.

2. The ASSIST Board of Directors should insist that budget recommendations are linked directly to goals in the strategic plan.

3. The ASSIST Board of Directors should require that tactical/operational plans be developed, consistent with the strategic plan, which outline measurable objectives and performance measures.

4. The ASSIST Board of Directors should formalize its meeting procedures including the development and dissemination of agendas and minutes. Agendas and meetings should reflect an issue/topic continuum, i.e., 1) new discussion item; 2) formal Board action/decision; 3) Board instructions to staff; 4) ACS action plans; 5) staff progress reports to the Board; and 6) Board evaluation of results.

5. The ASSIST Board of Directors should formally evaluate the ASSIST Coordination Site Director, basing the evaluation on his/her effectiveness in achieving objectives delineated in the strategic plan. The UC administrator with managerial responsibility for the ACS office and administrative supervision of the ACS Director should formally and actively participate in this evaluation.

CHAPTER 4.0
ASSIST EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

4.1 Introduction and Background

As established in Chapter 2.0, the ASSIST Board of Directors has not engaged in formal strategic planning. Such planning would establish appropriate measures of outcomes or results against which ASSIST's on-going performance could be evaluated. As a result, there was little baseline data available for measuring ASSIST's performance.

During our evaluation, we were able to collect sufficient data to support an assessment of ASSIST's effectiveness and efficiency from several key perspectives including ASSIST's impact on:

- Changes in student transfer rates among community colleges;
- Use of ASSIST by students and counselors;
- The quantity and quality of information provided to transfer students by counselors and advisers;
- The articulation process among participating institutions;
- Access to and dissemination of articulation information;
- Use of the Campus Information component of ASSIST;
- Selected key customer satisfaction;
- Costs of ASSIST services; and
- Value of Progress Check.

In the following sections, we present the results of these evaluations. A complete compilation of stakeholder survey results are presented in Appendix A.

4.1.1 ASSIST Impact on Transfer Rates

The intent of the legislation which created transfer centers, and through which ASSIST was established as an intersegmental project, was to encourage transfer by community college students to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. Based on transfer information gathered as part of our evaluation, the proportion of students transferring to total community college enrollment dropped from 1985 to 1989; remained flat from 1989 to 1992; and rose in 1993 and 1994. A closer look at the transfer of students within long-term ASSIST community colleges revealed that the proportion of transfer students provided by these colleges as a percent of the total state transfers has changed little over the years.

Since many factors beyond the control of ASSIST or transfer centers affect the student transfer rate, i.e., economic conditions and admissions policies, it is not appropriate to attribute success or failure solely to ASSIST. However, it is appropriate to consider this data as one of several outcomes which should be influenced by ASSIST.

4.1.2 Use of Assist by Students and Counselors

For the purposes of this part of our evaluation, we determined that the chief value added by ASSIST lies in the attributes of database access to information, not in the paper copies printed from ASSIST. All articulation agreements, including those created in ASSIST and those created through other means, exist in hard copy. At most community colleges, these paper copies of articulation agreements are usually kept in binders organized by academic year and receiving institution. With the advent of transfer centers, individual copies of articulation agreements and summaries of articulation information prepared by the colleges have been made available and are usually easily accessible to students.

Traditionally, the binders of paper copies have been used by counselors, in combination with catalogs and other data, as the primary source of reference material used in counseling students. This remains true today.

We found that the use of the ASSIST database on-line by counselors and students is very limited. Fifteen of the twenty-two community college campuses which have been using ASSIST over the past few years reported in a recent ACS survey that approximately 220 counselors, articulation officers and others use the ASSIST articulation database on-line. When contacted to learn more about counselor on-line use of ASSIST, several campuses clarified their survey response indicating that this was a prospective estimate of how many may use the system or will use it in the future. Others indicated that, although their counselors have used the system in the past, either they have ceased or reduced their use of ASSIST. In 1994, these fifteen campuses accounted for 8848 transfers to CSU or UC, approximately 80% of the transfers for campuses using ASSIST and approximately 22% of all transfers from California community colleges. Only two colleges reported that students have direct access to ASSIST on-line.

The focus of ASSIST marketing efforts over the years has been on getting the electronic database onto campuses. Because ASSIST is a distributed database, updated periodically, much energy has had to be expended setting up the conditions on each campus to support hardware/software requirements and the update process. The actual use of the database at each college has been a function of the college's emphasis on the use of technology and the priority of the transfer process

4.1.3 Quality of Counseling

Without exception, colleges and universities surveyed as a part of our study indicated that ASSIST has contributed to the quality of counseling and advisement services. The most frequently mentioned benefits of ASSIST to counseling include:

- Students come to the counseling sessions better prepared to discuss transfer options based on information they have gained from the use of transfer center services or their own research in ASSIST;

- Because students are better prepared, counselors are able to spend more of the 30 minute counseling sessions talking with students about educational goals and plans rather than looking for specific course articulation information;

- Because ASSIST includes agreements for many sending and receiving institutions, the counselor can help guide students through "what if" scenarios;

- Counselors who use ASSIST on-line can print copies for the student;

- Counselors who use ASSIST on-line have easy access to articulation in the database rather than having to wade through binders or piles of agreements;

- Counselors use of ASSIST on-line to identify alternatives for students with unique transfer plans can help identify new articulation opportunities;

- ASSIST reduces the amount of paperwork required to support articulation information needs; and

- Counselors using ASSIST on-line can search for articulation information through a wide variety of parameters including, but not limited to, department, major, course, CAN.

Several colleges indicated that the ASSIST articulation database increases the effective counseling capacity in that, although 30 minutes is still the typically allotted time for counseling sessions, ASSIST improves the quality and quantity of data which can be shared. Two respondents estimated that the net gain in counseling capacity was approximately twenty-five percent.

Criticisms of ASSIST related to counseling focused on the fact that few counselors use ASSIST on-line. Reasons for this expressed by community college Articulation Officers and Transfer Center Directors included lack of counselor access to ASSIST on a network; lack of counselor commitment to the use of technology; and lack of counselor training in the use of technology. The reason counselors with access to ASSIST on-line mentioned most often was that the database was not as complete or up-to-date as the paper copies kept in their offices.

4.1.4 Improvements in the Articulation Process

Articulation Officers responding to our surveys indicated that ASSIST has a real and positive impact on the articulation process. Examples of the value added by ASSIST included:

- ASSIST encourages new articulation by revealing what other colleges have done and in what academic areas;

- ASSIST allows articulation to be developed and maintained in a single database;

- ASSIST has established standard formats for storing and exhibiting articulation information;

- On campuses where articulation is managed in ASSIST, many aspects of the articulation process have been standardized, improving the process's efficiency;

- ASSIST has built an infrastructure for getting course and articulation information into a corporate database; and

- ASSIST accommodates the use of Email and other communication modes to deliver articulation information to students and other institutions.

Criticisms of ASSIST evident in survey responses included:

- Information is not complete since not all campuses have or use ASSIST;

- The database is cumbersome and cannot generate reports which incorporate data from different colleges and/or academic years; and

- ASSIST update cycles create a lag time for the most current information to appear in the database.

4.1.5 Use of ASSIST on the Internet

In recent years, the ACS has set up a World Wide Web page and provided for access to the ASSIST articulation database on the Internet. This enhancement, which was targeted toward making ASSIST accessible to university faculty, provided an opportunity to develop a version of ASSIST in an environment more easily accessible to users. ACS staff update the Internet version of the database monthly with information received from participating baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. Several campuses which manage articulation in ASSIST were pleased that they could update the database more frequently on the Internet.

Based on survey and interview responses, it appears that the ASSIST articulation database on the Internet is not used routinely. Most who indicated they have tried to use it felt it was slow and not easy to use.

4.1.6 Use of the Campus Information Maintained in ASSIST

We found little evidence of use of the campus information maintained in ASSIST. Most people interviewed and surveyed indicated that this information can be found elsewhere more conveniently, such as in catalogs and on the World Wide Web. Respondent's specific comments about the Campus Information component of ASSIST are included in surveys appended to this report.

4.1.7 Customer Satisfaction

We collected a significant amount of data on customer satisfaction with ASSIST through surveys and interviews with stakeholders. Each survey requested respondents to list ASSIST strengths and weaknesses. Responses are shared here and in other sections of this report relevant to the topic being discussed.

Two key stakeholder groups, students and counselors, have yet to benefit significantly from on-line access to the ASSIST articulation database.

Articulation Officers, Transfer Center Directors, ASSIST Managers and Technical Support staff on each community college campus using the ASSIST articulation database are generally satisfied with its performance. There was overwhelming appreciation expressed for the level of support received from ACS management and staff. Most of the criticisms focused on issues well known by the Board and the ACS: ASSIST's archaic software environment; the need for more complete and up-to-date data; and the weaknesses of user documentation.

4.1.8 Costs of ASSIST Services

Historical budget information for Project ASSIST was collected for the past five years. Over this period, total annual expenditures for all Project ASSIST related activities averaged approximately $1,200,000. Direct costs for ASSIST Coordination Site staff and expenses averaged approximately $575,000 annually. The remainder is used for special projects and to fund a part of campus costs to manage and maintain ASSIST information. The agreed upon total budget for 1996-97 is $1,295,000.

Moneys are contributed by each segment to fund ASSIST operations. These moneys are fully dedicated to support ASSIST under the oversight of the ASSIST Board of Directors. However, this has not always been the case. During the more contentious moments of ASSIST's history, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office has expressed its desire to withhold the segment's contribution. On occasion, submission of CCCCO's contribution has been delayed and some of the money has been redirected for other purposes. The result has been an unstable funding pattern which has demoralized ACS staff and has made it difficult to plan expenditures for project activities.

In assessing the overall value of ASSIST to the state, we first needed to estimate Community College, UC, and CSU costs not included in Project ASSIST allocations and/or savings which result from participation in Project ASSIST. Currently, approximately fifty-six community colleges, all eight general UC campuses, and twelve CSU campuses participate in ASSIST. All of the participating UC and CSU campuses and twenty-two of the community colleges have participated for several years. Approximately 36 community colleges began using ASSIST in 1995-1996. Interviews and surveys did not reveal significant additional campus costs directly and exclusively related to ASSIST.

Additional costs are comprised primarily of community college designated ASSIST Manager and technical support staff time. Based on an estimate of one-half FTE for each of the 22 participating community colleges at a cost of $25,000 for salary and benefits, the additional cost to ASSIST is $550,000. The first $10,000 of costs for maintaining each CSU and UC campus' ASSIST data is included in the ASSIST budget. Therefore, our estimate of additional costs for participating UC and CSU campuses, based on the same one-half FTE assumption is $255,000 ($15,000 for each of the 17 participating UC and CSU campuses). Based on these assumptions, the total ASSIST estimated average annual cost to the state is $2,100,000.

A significant difficulty arises in attempting to measure the cost effectiveness of ASSIST in that the Board has not clearly defined outcomes or results it expects ASSIST to achieve. As a result, there is no

clear base against which costs can be attributed. Thus, the reasonableness of any basis upon which one compares costs is subject to each reader's expectations for the system. Several possibilities were offered including students transferring from ASSIST-using colleges, computers with access to ASSIST, counselors using ASSIST, colleges using ASSIST, etc. Dependent on the basis used, annual costs of ASSIST ranged, for example, from $28,767 per participating community college and baccalaureate institution to $234 per student transferring from a participating community college.

4.1.9 Value of Progress Check

Sixteen of the twenty-two community colleges using the ASSIST articulation database also reported using the Progress Check component. Progress Check is one of three original components of the UCI/ASSIST product which effectively defined Project ASSIST, the intersegmental endeavor. The other components included campus information and articulation data. Progress Check is used to check a student's record against degree requirements expressed in a separate database from the ASSIST articulation database. For progress checks against degree requirements by major, it requires that in lieu of tables (ILOTS) be built in ASSIST by the receiving baccalaureate degree-granting institution. For progress checks against CSU/GE or IGETC requirements, Progress Check uses the information already resident in the ASSIST articulation database. Individual community colleges can use Progress Check for a variety of purposes, including AA/AS degree requirements, if they choose to build the required data tables.

Progress Check was a source of much dissension among Board members during the past few years. As a result, colleges were not encouraged to use the Progress Check from 1992 through 1995. In January, 1996, the ACS resumed the provision of routine maintenance services to colleges using Progress Check. A plan remains to be developed related to if and how the Progress Check component of ASSIST will be enhanced or expanded to more campuses in the future. A proposal being discussed by the Board suggests charging a fee to cover services to new campuses wishing to use this component. No final decisions had been made as of the date of this report.

Based on stakeholder interviews and survey responses, it appears that very few colleges use Progress Check aggressively. Seven of nine colleges with Progress Check responding to our survey indicated that they do not use it routinely. One other indicated that it is used cyclically during semester by a few counselors. Only two reported that progress check was available for direct student use.

Those colleges which use Progress Check report general satisfaction with the product. The most frequently mentioned strengths of Progress Check included:

- Progress Check increases the efficiency in counseling sessions since students bring results with them to discuss.
- Progress Check calculates the appropriate GPA, saving the counselor time.
- Progress Check reports are easy to understand.

Most respondents acknowledge that Progress Check has limitations. The most significant flaws reported include:

- Lack of confidence that the information in the Progress Check tables is accurate and up-to-date.
- Progress Check may not apply a course used to fulfill requirements the best way for the student's objectives.
- Difficulties with downloading transcript data have discouraged Progress Check use on some campuses.
- Progress Check works best for "native" students who have completed all of their course work at a single institution. However, many students today have completed course work at several colleges. These must be entered separately into Progress Check, requiring extra processing some users indicate is not worth the trouble.
- Very few baccalaureate degree-granting receiving institutions have demonstrated willingness to devote the time and resources to build the ILOTS required for the community colleges to use Progress Check for majors. Therefore, it is used primarily for CSU/GE Breadth and IGETC.

Beyond these findings, Progress Check is application software designed to use ASSIST articulation information for specific purposes. Several stakeholders, particularly community college MIS representatives expressed concern that Progress Check depended on Revelation, a proprietary software environment outside of the mainstream of products used most frequently today. Mainstream products are products which comply with accepted industry standards, enjoy widespread use, are enhanced by many support and add-on products and for which programming support is easily available. Thus, they believe that this software application is restrictive and interferes with their freedom and flexibility to access and use the database in accordance with their own campus information systems plans. Several campuses indicated that they currently use or plan to use other available products to develop educational plans and conduct degree audits.

Finally, stakeholders interviewed during our study overwhelmingly emphasized that the articulation database, as opposed to any other component of ASSIST, is the most important aspect of ASSIST. They expressed the hope that the articulation database will be expanded and access to it will be improved. These findings are consistent with those of the ASSIST evaluation completed in 1991 which stated in its findings on Pages 20 and 21:

"In concrete terms, Project ASSIST delivers two types of usable products: (a) **data** in the form of articulation agreements, course lists, and other information related to transfer and (b) **software** with which the data may be maintained, reviewed, and manipulated....Universally, campus representatives indicated that the most important product to them was the data, especially if the data were accurate and the database represented widespread state coverage."

In the recommendations section on Page 38, the report goes on to say:

"The main product of ASSIST is not software or technical support but information....*Top priority should be given to expanding the articulation database.*"

4.2 Conclusions for ASSIST's Efficiency and Effectiveness

1. The ASSIST Board of Directors has not established performance measures by which to evaluate ASSIST's performance.

2. Campuses using ASSIST do not appear to have markedly improved their transfer rate over the past ten years. Since this is only one measure of ASSIST's effectiveness, it should not be used as the most critical measure since many other factors affect transfer which are beyond the control of ASSIST.

3. Use of the ASSIST database on-line by students and counselors is very limited. Several of those campuses reporting the on-line use by counselors in the recent ACS survey admitted when contacted by telephone that on-line use is not routine. Only two campuses reported making the articulation database available to students.

4. The concept of providing an official electronic repository for all articulation agreements for easy access by students and counselors is universally supported.

5. Those campuses which have fully implemented ASSIST and make the articulation database available to counselors and students are strongly supportive of ASSIST's role in the counseling process.

6. The infrastructure represented by the ASSIST organization, including the ACS, participating institutions and the segmental representation reflected in the Board of Directors, has taken many years to build and should be protected in any changes the Board may contemplate.

7. The Campus Information component of ASSIST is not widely used or supported.

8. The ACS has established good working relationships with participating institutions and has earned a reputation for quickly and effectively responding to user needs.

9. It is difficult to judge the costs and benefits of ASSIST until the Board establishes agreed measures of performance. However, we have concluded that, if ASSIST can effectively serve all California community college students who intend to transfer, the average cost per year per student served would reflect a good value for the benefit returned.

10. The use of Progress Check is limited to a few colleges which have been aggressive in their use of technology.

11. Progress Check is a product for which alternatives exist in the information marketplace. Progress Check is a system designed to use articulation information for a specific purpose. Resources committed to maintain and enhance the Campus Information and Progress Check components of ASSIST reduce resources available to expand and enhance the Articulation Database component. We have concluded and recommended that Project ASSIST's highest priority should be providing students and counselors with access to an official statewide comprehensive and up-to-date articulation database.

4.3 Recommendations for Improving ASSIST's Efficiency and Effectiveness

1. The ASSIST Board of Directors should establish clear expectations for the benefits of ASSIST and institute methods to monitor on-going accomplishments. Measures should focus on key results rather than process or workload measures such as the number of campuses using ASSIST or the number of students accessing the database. These measures should be established as part of a formal strategic planning process recommended earlier.

   Based on the public policy analysis presented in Chapter 2.0, findings from previous ASSIST studies, and claims made in ASSIST documentation and promotional material, the primary purpose of ASSIST is to encourage articulation and transfer and help students plan and execute their academic careers more efficiently and effectively. Examples of measures we believe might be appropriate for ASSIST include:

   - The degree to which all students are clearly and fully informed as to which community college courses and units are transferable and meet the general education and lower division major requirements of the CSU and UC;
   - Growth in student transfer rates from California community colleges to California public baccalaureate degree-granting institutions;
   - Growth in articulation among California public higher education institutions;
   - Reduction in time to transfer and degree for students choosing to transfer;
   - Reduction in units to transfer and degree for students choosing to transfer;
   - Reduction in total costs for each transfer student's higher education leading to transfer and degree;
   - Improvement in the quantity and quality of information provided to transfer students by counselors and advisers;
   - Level of key customer satisfaction (key customers include students, advisers/counselors, and campus articulation staff); and
   - Cost effectiveness of ASSIST services.

2. The ASSIST Board of Directors should direct the ACS staff to develop ways to focus their efforts on expanding the availability of the ASSIST articulation database to all students and counselors. The ASSIST Board of Directors should adopt this as their top priority and operational focus over the next few years. Focusing on finding the best means to get articulation information into the hands of students and counselors represents a fundamental change in the way the Board and the ACS does business. It will likely require that efforts be shifted away from installing the database on more

campuses and toward getting the database in an environment universally and easily accessible to the existing ASSIST participants as well as non-participants. The ACS should develop a detailed plan which takes advantage of the strengths of the existing ASSIST infrastructure and does not abandon existing commitments.

3. The Campus Information component of ASSIST is not used sufficiently nor is it integrally related to ASSIST's core business responsibility identified in the previous recommendation. Therefore, it should no longer be supported by ASSIST's intersegmental funding.

4. The Progress Check component of ASSIST is not used sufficiently nor is it integrally related to ASSIST's top priority identified in Recommendation 2. Therefore, it should no longer be supported by ASSIST intersegmental funding. Only if sufficient financial support can be elicited from users to cover all costs of Progress Check, should the Board continue to support it.

CHAPTER 5.0
ASSIST USE OF TECHNOLOGY

5.1 Introduction and Background

ASSIST's use of technology was a significant component of the two previous evaluations of Project ASSIST in 1988 and 1992. Both studies identified ASSIST's failure to use "mainstream" platform and database products. Both recommended significant changes. Most of the key recommendations from these reports are relevant today. Although many are important, two key recommendations which have not been implemented include:

- ASSIST still exists on Revelation software which is incompatible with current mainstream products and unfriendly to users; and
- The ASSIST Board of Directors has not acquired the services of an outside systems expert to advise them on the best way to transition out of their current environment.

In 1992, the Board of Directors was expanded to include the lead technology representatives from UC, CSU and the Community Colleges. In 1995, the Board established a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made up of these representatives and the ACS Director. The TAC was asked to work with campus technical representatives to gain input on technology aspects of the Project and develop recommendations to address problems associated with ASSIST's use of technology. One of the first products of the committee was a Software Development Framework to guide ASSIST systems changes and enhancements. The TAC is currently working on an ASSIST Technology Plan. An early draft of the plan was provided to this evaluation team. As the TAC began their technology planning work, they discovered that there was no strategic framework or context for their planning in that there is no strategic plan for the overall project. As a result, they constructed a framework based on their best understanding of Project ASSIST's vision and mission.

5.2 Conclusions for ASSIST's Use of Technology

1. Recent changes by the Board have significantly increased its involvement in the technological aspects of ASSIST. The creation of a Technical Advisory Committee and its subsequent development of a Software Development Framework for ASSIST enhancements provides a formal structured process for stakeholders to be directly involved in system changes.

2. In their work to prepare a technology plan, the Technical Advisory Committee discovered what is emphasized in this report; ASSIST needs a strategic framework to support planning and decision making at all levels.

3. In the draft Technology Plan the TAC contemplates a centralized database accessed via Web browsers on the Internet. This is consistent with the recommendations included in this report.

4. The draft of the ASSIST Technology Plan reviewed for this assessment is incomplete. It lacks the specificity required to drive action and evaluate progress. Specifically, the draft document made available to our study describes a desired system environment very different from that currently in place. However, it does not specify what must be done, how it will be done, or in what time frame to accomplish the transition from the ASSIST of today to the ASSIST of the future.

5. Although recommended in two previous evaluations dating to 1988, Project ASSIST has not moved its products offered to community colleges into a more mainstream software environment.

6. ASSIST on the Internet has not been well received due to difficulties using the product. The ASSIST on the Internet service was developed using a database product that cannot be considered mainstream.

7. Many students and almost all community colleges have or will soon have access to the Internet.

8. The products (ASSIST and ASSIST on the Internet) have been designed to be accessible by the least sophisticated user environment. For example, ASSIST on the Internet can be accessed using a terminal which is much less sophisticated than a Windows-based PC. ASSIST's minimum supported environment decisions have contributed to its products being much less friendly to more sophisticated users.

5.3 Recommendations for ASSIST's Use of Technology

1. The Technical Advisory Committee should delay any further action on the development of a technology plan pending the outcome of the Board of Director's strategic planning effort recommended in this report. The strategic plan should establish a clear framework for ASSIST's use of technology.

2. ASSIST's technology plan should include specific actions required to move all aspects of ASSIST into a more mainstream software environment; an environment supporting easy and flexible access to information in the articulation database by the largest feasible audience. The final technology plan should include clear definitions of projects and a prioritization of those projects. Proposed projects should reflect a progression which will move the products to include the qualities demanded by the Board's strategic plan.

3. The ASSIST Board of Directors should acquire the services of an outside systems expert to advise the TAC and the ACS in their efforts to build and implement a comprehensive technology plan for ASSIST which supports program goals established in the Board's strategic plan.

4. Articulation agreements must be distributed more quickly. Any technology plan should propose a method to propagate new and revised articulation agreements to all participants rapidly and easily such that counselors and students are working with the most current information.

5. ASSIST on the Internet should be carefully assessed for its potential to be the long-term solution for storing, maintaining, updating, and retrieving articulation information in an on-line real-time mode.

6. As part of any technology plan, the minimum supported environment should be re-evaluated.

7. Future ASSIST products and services should incorporate expectations adopted by the Board for an effective statewide, electronic transfer information system. These expectations should include as a minimum:

    - It is desirable that the database management software be independent of any operating system so that it can be used by other operating systems and report generating applications;
    - It is desirable that the database management software be usable on many different platforms;
    - It is desirable that the data in the database be drawn from a single electronic source to avoid duplication and insure timeliness and accuracy;
    - It is desirable that the applications supporting the database accommodate multiple concurrent sources of input;
    - It is desirable that the applications supporting the database accommodate multiple concurrent users of output;
    - It is desirable that the applications supporting the database accommodate the need for frequent changes and updates; and
    - It is desirable that information from the database be easily integrated with other student services data.

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

A.1 Acknowledgments

This evaluation of Project ASSIST could not have been completed without significant input from a wide range of ASSIST stakeholders. In the following section of this appendix, we have provided a listing of people who contributed to our evaluation through personal or telephonic interviews. We wish to acknowledge each person's contribution to our study and express our appreciation for the information provided. Since spellings were not obtained for all contributors, we apologize for any spelling errors.

Persons Contributing to the ASSIST Evaluation through Personal or Telephone Interviews

Kayleen Hallberg, CCCCO - Dean of Student Services

Kathleen Nelson, CCCCO - Transfer/Articulation Specialist

Mick Holsclaw, CCCCO - Vice Chancellor of Management Information Services

Thelma Scott-Skillman, CCCCO - Vice Chancellor of Student Services

Vivian Franco, CSU Chancellor's Office - Associate Dean of Eductaion Support Services

Allison Jones, CSU Chancellor's Office - Director of Access and Retention

Russ Utterberg, CSU Chancellor's Office - Director of Administrative Information Systems

Barbara Hooper, CSU Fullerton - Articulation Officer

Barbara Love, UC Santa Cruz, Articulation Officer

Dennis Galligani, UCOP - AVP of Student Academic Services

Jim Dolgonas, UCOP - Director of MIS

Carla Ferri, UCOP - Director of Admissions

Steve Handel, UCOP - Principal Analyst

Margaret Heisel, UCOP - Director of Outreach

Charles Ratliff, CPEC - Deputy Director

Kevin Woolfork, CPEC - Associate Policy Analyst

Eric Taggart, ASSIST Coordination Site - Director

Cathy Robin, ASSIST Coordination Site - Associate Director

Larry Coon, ASSIST Coordination Site - Technical Manager

Larry Estes, UC Davis - Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions (Retired)

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

Persons Contributing to the ASSIST Evaluation through Personal or Telephone Interviews (Continued)

Bob Ferrando, UC Davis - Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions

Helena Bennet, CSU Sacramento - Coordinator of Transfer Services

Rose Stock, CSU Fresno - Articulation Officer

Kathryn Barth, CSU Chico Articulation Officer

Judy O'Neill, CSU Chico ASSIST Coordinator

Ruth DeTro, Butte College - ASSIST Data Manager

William E. Threlfall, Chabot College - Chief MIS Officer

Hoyt Fong, Cosumnes River College - Counselor

Tom Kosuth, Golden West College - Transfer Center Director

Kathy Paukstis, Irvine Valley College - Counseling Director

Lisa Sugimoto, Long Beach City College - Dean of Counseling

Richard Beymer, Los Rios Community College District - Associate Chancellor

Joan Matsler, Los Rios Community College District - ASSIST Data Coordinator (Retired)

Jerry Stypes, Los Rios Community College District - MIS

Bob Bracht, Los Rios Community College District - ASSIST Technical Support

Bill Hamre, Santa Barbara City College - Director of Information Resources (CISOA)

Kathy McGuire, Santa Barbara City College - Articulation Officer

Keith McLellan, Santa Barbara City College - Dean of Student Development

Armando Segura, Santa Barbara City College - Transfer Center Director

Arleen Stagat, Santa Barbara City College - ASSIST Maintenance Administrator

Chris Pagliar, Santa Barbara City College - Counselor

Scott Brewer, Santa Barbara City College - Counselor

Margo Handelsman, Santa Barbara City College - Counselor

Ed Myers, West Valley College - Dean of Student Services

Lee Belarmino, San Juaquin Delta College - Chief Information Officer

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

Persons Contributing to the ASSIST Evaluation through Personal or Telephone Interviews (Continued)

Allan MacDougall, Saddleback Community College District - Director of Data Processing

Marilyn Christenson - Diablo Valley College Articulation Officer

Jim Phaneuf - Saddleback Community College District - Associate Director of Data Processing

Jill Harmon, Fresno City College - Transfer Center Director (President - Transfer Center Directors Association)

Janis Perry, (Community Colleges Academic Senate)

A.2 Survey of Community Colleges Not Participating in ASSIST

As part of our evaluation, we conducted several written and telephone surveys of ASSIST stakeholder groups. Our telephone interviews with Community College representatives from campuses which do not participate in ASSIST included the following persons.

Telephone Interviews with Articulation Officers of Community Colleges Not Using ASSIST

City College of San Francisco
Larry Damato

City College of San Francisco
Frank Chong, Dean of Student Services

Mendocino Community College
Jerry Harrison

East Los Angeles Community College
Sharron Deny

Los Angeles Mission Community College
Ken Hunt

Palomar Community College
Jan Kuzmich

Antelope Valley Communtity College
Dr. Lee Grayson

Merritt Community College
Peggy Pawek

Columbia Community College
Elsie Bruno

Porterville Community College
Steve Schultz

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

Telephone Interviews with Articulation Officers of Community Colleges Not Using ASSIST
(Continued)

Porterville Community College
Mercedes Herrera

Grossmont Community College
Joanne Prescott

Foothill Community College
Jean Wirth

Bakersfield Community College
Dr. Carlson

Feather River Community College
Don Freguilia

Cuyamaca Community College
Jerry Humpert

Mt. San Antonio Community College
Cindy Parish

Chaffey Community College
Howard Tcheurer

Cuesta Community College
James Stewart

Taft Community College
Lorretta Garcia-Lipscomb

College of the Desert
Lance Reed

Canada Community College

College of the Sequoias
Gregg Keane

Contra Costa Community College
Russell Van Dewark

Yuba Community College
Sheila White-Daniels

Solano Community College
Shirley Hamilton

Rio Hondo Community College
Barbara Booth

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

Telephone Interviews with Articulation Officers of Community Colleges Not Using ASSIST
(Continued)

Lake Tahoe Community College
Veronica Diaz

Palo Verde Community College
Sally Rivera

Fresno City College
Russell Mitchell

Crafton Hills Community College
Violet Newman

Coastline Community College
Ron Kline

Riverside Community College
Judy Haugh

Most colleges contacted which do not use ASSIST indicated that they support the concept of an automated database of articulation information and would like to have a product like ASSIST. Reasons given most frequently for these colleges decision not to participate in ASSIST included:

- Lack of funds to support hardware, software, and maintenance requirements.
- Lack of technical support.
- Lack of Administration support of ASSIST.
- Already using something else.
- Too hard to use.

Counselors on these campuses access articulation information through the following sources, listed in the order most frequently mentioned:

- paper copies
- word processing documents
- ASSIST on the Internet
- another system
- lotus spreadsheet

Almost half of the Articulation Officers contacted for this survey have tried ASSIST on the Internet. About one-half of these use it regularly. The rest have never used it.

A.3 Written Survey Responses

In the following sections of this appendix, we have provided copies of each written ASSIST stakeholder survey. Preceding each survey is a colored cover sheet which lists persons and institutions from which we received responses.

We have included a compilation of responses received to each question in each survey. Responses are separated by semicolons. This detail has been provided to enable the ASSIST Board of Directors and ACS staff to benefit from as much input from stakeholders as possible.

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS RECEIVED

UC/CSU Articulation Officers

UC Berkeley
Karen Lind-Taylor, Articulation Coordinator

UC Irvine
Raschel Greenberg, Articulation Officer/Program Director, Transfer Student Services

CSU San Bernardino
Bob Sperry, Assistant Coordinator

UC Riverside
Thea Labrenz,Articulation Officer

CSU Hayward
Michelle LaCentra, Articulation Officer

CSU Fullerton
Barbara Hooper, Articulation Officer/Assistant Manager

Cal Poly Pomona
D. Muzette Thibodeaux, Articulation Officer

CSU Fresno
Rose Stock, Articulation Officer

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
Jane Leaphart, On Course/Articulation Coordinator

UC Santa Cruz
Barbara Love, Articulation Officer

UC Santa Barbara
Susan Fauroat, Transfer Services Coordinator

UCLA
Rosemary Inks, ASSIST Coordinator

Project ASSIST Evaluation Survey Results

UC and CSU ARTICULATION OFFICERS

SECTION I - BENEFITS OF ASSIST ARTICULATION DATABASE

1. Is ASSIST used by advisors or counselors for any purpose at your university?

RESPONSES

YES 6 *NO 6*

1a. If no, skip to question 2.

2. Approximately how many advisors/counselors at your campus use ASSIST?

RESPONSES

50-75; CAMPUS-WIDE; 50; 6-10; 10+; 25-100

3. How do your students benefit from ASSIST?

RESPONSES

1. *Advisors use ASSIST to help students identify transferable courses they can take at Community Colleges during the summer.*
2. *ASSIST has contributed to increased articulation among colleges.*
3. *ASSIST is used to store and produce hard copies of articulation agreements for use by students in conjunction with advisors.*
4. *We can EMAIL and print articulation agreements to students with EMAIL address.*
5. *The GE Breadth agreements in ASSIST are updated, printed and sent to community colleges.*

4. How do your advisors/counselors benefit from ASSIST?

RESPONSES

1. *Ready access to articulation agreements.*
2. *Advisors use ASSIST to screen transfer applicants. The information is centrally and (we trust) reliably available.*
3. *ASSIST contributes to equity and uniformity in granting credit to students in that counselors and advisors are viewing the same data.*
4. *Articulation Officers can update and proof articulation agreements on our Novell Network for campus staff to view in ASSIST.*

5. Advisors/counselors at my Campus use ASSIST: (Check All that Apply)

RESPONSES

On-line - PC/Laptop -- 4 *In paper form -- 6* *On the Internet -- 5*

6. Has the use of ASSIST: (Answer each question)

RESPONSES

- *reduced advisor/counselor time in serving students? -- YES 6 NO 0*
- *increased information shared with students in counseling sessions? -- YES 6 NO 0*
- *increased the number of students served per counselor? -- YES 5 (qualified) NO 3 (qualified)*

6a. If yes to any above, please describe how:

RESPONSES

1. *Easier to produce articulation agreements, thus allowing for more agreements and more information for counselors to use.*
2. *Information all in one place reduces the need to consult multiple sets of resource materials.*
3. *Information is easier to retrieve, thus saving counselor time.*
4. *Information shared is more complete, timely and accessible.*
5. *Reduced paper copies have saved thousands of dollars.*
6. *Easier to update information since it is on network*

6b. If yes to any above, please estimate the net gain in annual counseling capacity resulting from the use of ASSIST at your campus. Express your response in terms of the number of positions, i.e., one-half PY, one PY, etc.: *One Response -½ PY*

7. Does anyone other than advisors/counselors benefit from ASSIST on your campus?

RESPONSES

YES -- 6 NO -- 6

7a. If yes, please explain.

RESPONSES

1. *Evaluators in the Admissions Office use documents, particularly UC TCAs to make admissions decisions.*

2. *Outreach representatives use ASSIST on lap tops to advise students in the field during visits to high schools and college campuses.*
3. *Faculty, department secretaries and staff.*
4. *Students.*
5. *Some Articulation Officers use ASSIST to manage articulation.*
6. *Evaluators have given up on ASSIST on the Internet since it is too slow and the interface is hard to learn and use.*
7. *Undergraduate coordinators from our major departments use the TCA component.*

SECTION II - MAINTENANCE OF ASSIST INFORMATION

8. Do you use ASSIST to manage articulation?

RESPONSES

YES 9 *NO 3*

8a. If yes, please describe.

RESPONSES

1. *ASSIST is the only computerized system we have for storing all our articulation agreement.*
2. *All articulation is maintained and developed in ASSIST.*
3. *ASSIST is used throughout the articulation process from initial faculty response to completed articulation documents.*
4. *ASSIST allows us to track changes in courses and curriculum.*
5. *We use ASSIST to create and update course-to-course articulation agreements for all Community Colleges. Database management is the only way we could maintain this extensive articulation.*
6. *ASSIST is used to develop articulation proposals.*
7. *Course-to-course agreements are re-formatted into major preparation agreements.*
8. *Some College-level, i.e., the College of Letters and Science, general education requirements are kept in ASSIST.*
9. *"Global" functions in ASSIST will reduce data entry time (once everything is in ASSIST).*
10. *GE Breadth agreements are updated for community colleges each year.*
11. *We use ASSIST as a word processor to create new agreements and update old agreements for the current academic year. Data is input into text fields due to the form of articulation.*
12. *Historical reports of articulation are <u>not</u> managed in ASSIST.*

9. Approximately how much total time each year do you and others on your campus spend maintaining ASSIST articulation database information?

RESPONSES

1 FTE; ½ FTE (4); ½-1 FTE; 1¼ FTE; 250hrs; ¼ FTE

10. Are you able to keep the articulation data in ASSIST accurate and up-to-date?

RESPONSES

YES 8 NO 1 (Does not participate) YES/NO 3

10a. If no, why not?

RESPONSES

1. *Depends on whether I can move away from PC maintenance of articulation and rely completely on ASSIST.*
2. *We update articulation data on a yearly basis; this process takes 6-9 months.*
3. *Because of the ASSIST database collection process, our local database is more current than that of the ACS and ASSIST using campuses.*
4. *There is some lag in getting information about changes (from us and other campuses) into ASSIST.*
5. *Lack of staff resources has kept us from updating all articulation files over the last several years.*

SECTION III - OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF ASSIST

11. What is your assessment of the Campus Information component of ASSIST?

RESPONSES

1. *Not many people use this data. It can be found elsewhere. (4)*
2. *Don't know, haven't used it.*
3. *No longer needed with World Wide Web.*
4. *This is not an efficient use of our time.*
5. *Better than working; however, the General Catalog provides better information.*
6. *Format is obsolete when compared to College View or WWW. (2)*
7. *We may be duplicating efforts by entering it into ASSIST.*

12. Please list the top three strengths and weaknesses you have experienced with the ASSIST articulation database.

RESPONSES – *STRENGTHS*

1. *Ease of storing and updating articulation agreements.*
2. *Excellent advising tool for community college counselors.*
3. *Data for all ASSIST campuses found in one system so students can compare. (2)*
4. *Once templates are built, they may be copied for wide application and they are easy to maintain.*
5. *Can reach students out of our service area with our data. (2)*
6. *Use of actual (up-to-date) course inventory. -- this is also a weakness in that current information is not always available and old information hurts us.*
7. *Utilities added to ASSIST maintenance have been extremely helpful, i.e., Global feature "search and replace" saves time. (3)*
8. *ASSIST has raised the awareness of articulation among students and faculty.*
9. *ASSIST has stimulated articulation and made articulation agreements more accessible to all.*
10. *ASSIST has contributed to common articulation formats and use of terms. (2)*
11. *State-wide database.*
12. *ASSIST provides capability to manipulate articulation in a database environment. Previously it was kept in a word processing environment.*
13. *Good, accurate information.*
14. *Saves time and money.*
15. *Almost a paperless system.*

RESPONSES – *WEAKNESSES*

1. *Revelation software. (4)*
2. *Not easy to download information into degree audit system. (2)*
3. *Inconsistent database installation instructions.*
4. *Current information is not always available.*
5. *Entering both course-to-course and by-major articulation agreements requires duplicate effort. (Keeps some from entering by-major agreements)*
6. *In the DOS version, each file has an associated academic year making it difficult and/or very slow to generate reports which incorporate data from different Community Colleges and/or different academic years. (2)*
7. *Very little control over how agreements look on the printed page. (some major agreements are now six pages long) Agreements printouts are too bulky.*
8. *Standard abbreviation list is far too long. In articulation agreement entry screen, fields sometimes get a list of standard abbreviations even when a course list exists.*
9. *Not all campuses have/use ASSIST.*
10. *Bad word processing environment.*

11. *System is cumbersome. Accomplishing some tasks requires utilizing multiple screens and menus. (2)*
12. *ASSIST on the Internet is slow and cumbersome.*
13. *Updates are not immediately available.*
14. *The database does not easily accommodate our form of articulation.*
15. *Software requires extensive, high-level, on-going technical support.*
16. *Not useful as historical record of articulation because ASSIST update cycles do not correspond to our campus articulation cycle.*

13. Other Comments?

RESPONSES

1. *Depends on whether I can move away from PC maintenance of articulation and rely completely on ASSIST.*
2. *Both a weakness and a strength, there always seems to be a version update to fix a "hidden" bug which means taking extra time to load.*
3. *I am very happy with the articulation subsystem and the support received from the ACS staff.*
4. *We look forward to the day when ASSIST is moved out of Revelation and functions easily on multiple platforms.*
5. *ASSIST is easy to maintain, read, search and print/disseminate.*
6. *I have stopped providing paper copies to on-campus departments saving about $5,000 per year in printing costs.*
7. *With help from the ACS staff, we have put our articulation data on the World Wide Web with little effort and expense.*
8. *Course prefix matches (or lack of) end up with only approximate catalog/transcript matches. Some connection to ASSIST update timetables would be helpful.*
9. *There is a need for uniformity in how course titles are entered/furnished to ASSIST. Problems include; how to best use the default data to its maximum, caps or no caps, full titles or abbreviations?*
10. *ASSIST unit values sometimes vary from what we use.*
11. *The visibility and presence of ASSIST articulation at the 2 year campuses gives a false sense of what the 4 year institutions can provide. The commitment of resources for updating articulation is directly proportional to the importance of ASSIST to the 4 year campus.*

SECTION IV - PROGRESS CHECK

14. Do you maintain the Progress Check database for any feeder community colleges?

RESPONSES

YES 2 *NO 10*

Comment - It represents duplicative effort to our degree audit system. We do not have enough resources to provide duplicative services.
Comment - CCs use Progress Check for AA/AS degree program; the articulation subsystem is our main focus.
Comment - Our priority shifted to getting articulation data into ASSIST.
Comment - Our focus is on articulation at this time

14a. If yes, are you able to keep Progress Check ILOTs and graduation requirements information accurate and up-to-date? *1 YES; 1YES & NO*

14b. If yes, approximately how much total time each year do you and others on your campus spend maintaining Progress Check database information? *100 hrs.; 50hrs.*

15. Please list the top three strengths and weaknesses you have experienced with Progress Check.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS

1. *Capable of processing GE Certification and IGETC information against student transcript data. (2)*
2. *Communicates degree requirement information that is specific to an individual student.*
3. *Batch runs can be made in advance of advisors' meetings with students.*
4. *Advisors can spend more time with students and less time with paperwork.*

WEAKNESSES

1. *Labor intensive. Requires maintenance and entry of more data to function properly.*
2. *ILOTS do not automatically obtain data from the articulation subsystem.*
3. *GPA/Unit information is not always accurate due to UC limits.*
4. *Progress Check does not perform multiple runs to place courses in the best areas to meet requirements.*
5. *Inflexible to the point that it cannot accurately and completely reflect our degree requirements.*
6. *Frequently gives unclear and inaccurate messages to the user: ex: "unable to articulate" when requirement has been satisfied by another course.*
7. *The technology on which the database is formed is quickly becoming obsolete.*

16. Other Comments on Progress Check?

RESPONSES

1. *Not enough bells and whistles to handle all the complexities of degree audits; overall units, GPAs, upper division, lower division, etc. from 4-year perspective.*
2. *We discontinued updating Progress Check ILOTS until a decision is made on its future.*
3. *We would be willing to supply data for regional partners if staffing concerns could be worked out and if Community Colleges were using the data.*
4. *Perfect data are required for the progress check to work, but extremely difficult to provide due to the lack of standard format among institutions' course list data.*

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS RECEIVED

College ASSIST Representatives-Colleges Using ASSIST

Cerritos College
Chris Sugiyama, Counselor/Assist Coordinator

Irvine Valley College
Kathy Paukstis, Counselor/Project Assist Manager

Rancho Santiago College
Paula Begin, University Articulation Cordinator

Sacramento City College
John Suter, Articulation Officer

Butte College
Ruth DeTro, Data Manager

Golden West College
Tom Kosuth, Articulation/Transfer Center Counselor

Orange Coast College
Bruce Cary, Director-Transfer Services and Articulation

American River College
John McGregor, Transfer Center Director

De Anza College
Rena Frabony, Articulation Officer/Director, Office of Relations with Schools

Laney College
Marilyn Rowe, Articulation Officer

Santa Barbara City College
Armando Segura, Director Transfer Center

Los Angeles Harbor College
Brenda Guertin, Articulation Officer

Cosumnes River College
Hoyt Fong, Counselor

College of the Siskiyous
Bruce Johnston, Articulation Officer

Project ASSIST Evaluation Survey

COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSIST REPRESENTATIVES

Community Colleges Using ASSIST before 1996

SECTION I - BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR ARTICULATION DATABASE ONLY

1. How long has your campus/district been using ASSIST?

RESPONSES

5 yrs, since SP '91; 4 yrs.; 11 yrs (3); 6 yrs.; Since approx. '86-87;

Approx. 10 yrs; Since 1991; 5 yrs; Since inception; 10 yrs.;

Attended first group mtg. for equipment distribution in Dec. 1985.

2. Why did your campus/district choose to use ASSIST?

RESPONSES

At the time it seemed the direction the state was moving and articulation database seemed most comprehensive. We had no degree audit system and thought ASSIST would supply that.

To get all of our articulation information into one place and then to easily provide it to students.

Thought it would be a good tool for advising students.

The campus chose to use ASSIST to facilitate articulation and produce CSU Certification Progress Checks. Other factors include: established working relationship with UCI and /Transfer Center Coordinator's vision and enthusiasm for the project.

Chose ASSIST because it was low cost and accurate compared to other software packages. The maintenance of the database by the four year college was an advantage.

It was the first program of its kind available and it was reasonably priced.

To obtain a reasonably priced degree audit system and to maintain articulation agreements electronically.

Hoped it would facilitate increased articulation activity and allow access to articulation information. (2)

It promised on-line access of data; to streamline, promote, and access articulation; to facilitate transfer of students; to provide counselors/students consistent, reliable and current transfer information.

Goals and aims of ASSIST seemed like a natural tie-in to the development of a transfer center.

We wanted to find the most effective and consistent means of providing students with up-to-date transfer information.

3. Approximately how many students at your campus/district transfer to UC or CSU each year?

RESPONSES

592; 50; 250-300; 750; 800; 1025; 1,800

CSU: 700-750; UC: 100-150; 1,285; UC: 400; CSU: 12-1500;

300; 1200; UC: 630; CSU: 360;

4. Approximately how many counselors at your campus/district use ASSIST?

RESPONSES

20 (18 f/t); Last yr. 6, this yr. 0; 4; 4-6; 6; 7; 45;

40; 17-20; 4; 8;

11, adding the transfer center, Graduation and Articulation staffs brings the number to 15.

1-PC based version, 23- trained to use Internet version, 30-use paper form articulation

5. Do students at your campus/district have direct access to ASSIST on-line?

RESPONSES

Not yet; No (6); Yes (5) Not Currently;

Yes, Internet version, No, PC based, Yes, paper form articulation

SECTION II - BENEFITS OF ASSIST ARTICULATION DATABASE
(Separate Progress Check Questions are in Section VI)

6. How do students benefit from ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Being able to get accurate and current articulation agreements (2)

Includes articulation for colleges outside of local region. Format is consistent and easy to read.

Saves students time of searching through papers and articulation guides. Provides comprehensive up-to-date information.(2)

Students can access information at any time without an appointment to see a counselor. (2)

Direct access to ASSIST in Transfer Center and Administration Building, curriculum sheets to UC Berkeley and San Jose State developed from ASSIST data. Specific transfer data for UC's and CSU's available by visiting counselors/academic advisors.

Transfer planning is more accurate with hard copies of articulation agreements and course to course lists.

Information provided to students is more appropriate because it is more accurate.

Consistent evaluation of academic progress; availability of current articulation information.

Most articulation is in the ASSIST format and is available to students from counselors and the Transfer Center.

Students benefit from advising that we are able to do based on access to articulation in ASSIST. Some also can have progress checks done showing what they have completed and what they still need to take.

Major articulation is provided in an easy to use format.

7. How do counselors benefit from ASSIST

RESPONSES

ASSIST is more expedient, it saves on catalog search, call to institutions for articulation information and avoids dependency on articulation counselor.

Saves pulling catalogs and articulation files to assist students.

Access to articulation agreements for colleges not listed on our advising sheets.

Easy to locate, use, and copy articulation information helps in working with students.

Saves time in progress evaluations and articulation "searches", prevents mistakes in evaluations.

Counselors can provide more accurate information.(2)

The bulk of transfer information available to counselors is from the ASSIST database. Counselors have access to data over Network. It is consistent and current.

Quick on desk data.

Counselors have immediate access with consistency.

It allows them to print out information for a student, review it with the student, and hand it to the student for reference. It also provides a reasonably standard format, and allows counselors to view articulation between other colleges.

Provides access to information that counselors otherwise would not have i.e. A-F courses, many colleges outside of the local region, articulation between other community and 4 year colleges. The Internet version gives counselors who work in locations without proximity to the Transfer Center, access to information that they do not have in paper form.

Easy access; enhances student-counselor relationships especially with younger students who are computer oriented.

8. Counselors at my Campus/District use ASSIST: (Check One)

RESPONSES

On-line (1): Coming in Summer 1996

In paper form (2)

Both(12)

9. Has the use of ASSIST on-line or in paper form: (Answer each question)

RESPONSES

- **reduced counselors' time in serving students?** *Yes (8) No(2) No/Yes*

  Possibly, more likely it allows time for counselors to cover other Info.

- **increased information shared with students in counseling sessions?** *Yes (12)*

- **increased the number of students served per counselor?** *No (9) Yes (2)*

  Probably not

9a. If yes to any above, please describe how:

RESPONSES

ON LINE

The printouts save counselors time and students like having complete major preparation requirements in one place.

Can print out detailed articulation information to give to the student rather then having to look up information. in catalogs and write it down.

Counselors are able to use ASSIST for "clerical" functions enabling them to spend more quality time with students.

Counselors report that finding information in ASSIST is often more trouble than it is worth. They do not have time in a 30 minute appointment to find the information. rapidly enough to reduce time spent.

You don't have to search the catalog, you have an approved course according to the 4 year school.

All counselors have access to ASSIST over the Network. All Administrators, faculty, counselors, and staff have access to ASSIST on Internet.

LAN system available to 30 possible users.

ASSIST has allowed expansion of our Career Counseling services by reducing demands on academic counseling. After students run the articulation or pick up a hard copy from the Transfer Center, they find that many of the questions they had are answered.

ASSIST doesn't necessarily reduce the amount of time spent with a student, but it does enhance the quality of the time.

More information is available and in different formats. Counselors working outside of the Counseling Center have access to ASSIST information via Internet.

Being able to get accurate and current articulation agreements and with easy access which helps enhance counselor-student relationships especially with younger students who are computer oriented.

Will be used more as soon as available on all counselor's computers and they have the ability to print information.

PAPER FORM

Counselors can refer to the paper copies when they only need to have information on one or two courses, or when they don't need to give the student a copy.

Counselors are able to use ASSIST for "clerical" functions enabling them to send more quality time with students.

Increase in the number of articulation agreements available, results in less "guesswork" by counselors and more reliable information delivered to students.

Student has an official copy of approved requirements; which protects them after they transfer if there are questions or changes at the 4-year school.

A hard copy of all articulation on ASSIST is available in a centralized location in Counseling Center. Attractive major sheets for have been published and made available in Transfer and Counseling Centers.

ASSIST has allowed expansion of our Career Counseling services by reducing demands on academic counseling. After students run the articulation or pick up a hard copy from the Transfer Center, they find that many of the questions they had are answered.

ASSIST doesn't necessarily reduce the amount of time spent with a student, but it does enhance the quality of the time.

Provides counselors easy access to articulation agreements in their office. They do not have to go to the transfer center where the ASSIST computer is located. Having articulation at hand means less time spent researching; leaving more time to help students with other concerns.

Counselor time is reduced to the degree that other institutions participate. Takes time to look up Info. for non-participating schools.

Information shared with students is increased only when information is needed from participating schools. It is decreased when information is needed from non-participating schools.

For most "popular" majors, counselors also have paper copies in a binder. this accomplishes several things: (1) Information for counselors not all that comfortable with computers (2) if counselor using binder for agreements not on ASSIST, does not have to go back and forth between book and computer; paper copy reinforces ASSIST format.

Used constantly by counselors and students.

9b. If yes to any above, please estimate the net gain in <u>annual</u> counseling capacity resulting from the use of ASSIST at your campus/district. Express your response in terms of the number of positions, i.e., one-half PY, one PY, etc.:

<u>RESPONSES</u>

.05 PYs; 1/4 PYs (2); N/A; ? 4-5 PYs;

We have been able to reallocate the equivalent of 2 FTE;s into career counseling and the Transfer Center.

No, Students are seen during 1/2 hrs. appointments. ASSIST does not change student/counselor time.

Gain is in the quality of contact not the quantity.

Can't guess-we have to serve the same numbers of students either way, but efficiency improves with ASSIST.

SECTION III - RELIABILITY OF ASSIST ARTICULATION DATABASE
(Separate Progress Check Questions are in Section VI)

10. Do you trust that the data in ASSIST is accurate and up-to-date?

RESPONSES

Yes (7); Mostly; Yes/No (2);

Yes, it is accurate and largely up-to-date (Future plans may also mean it will be more up-to-date)

Yes, but there are problems with UC unit limitations which we inform students about.

10a. If yes, what gives you this assurance?

RESPONSES

We submit our changes.

I have not come upon any serious errors in the articulation subsystem.

Data maintenance is the responsibility of participating schools, who are pretty meticulous about its preparation.

Accurate and up-to-date information can be accessed via Internet.

Using text notations.

I have proof-read all the information.

I believe in the professionalism of participants and ASSIST staff, trust the process for collecting and distributing the data, and training and on-going support from the ASSIST staff, I believe minimizes problems with the data. Also, I have not experienced data problems.

The information is directly entered and maintained by the colleges involved.

Over the years 6 errors have been noticed. The fact that the receiving institution inputs information implies a high degree of accuracy.

The articulation dates are on the printout.

I have checked some agreements against the catalog.

We depend upon the expertise of articulation officers at all campuses who oversee and check data for ASSIST. Also, counselors report possible errors; few are reported. Our Articulation Officer also checks data

10b. If no, why not?

RESPONSES

With the twice annual updates there's a delay between what gets articulated and what gets in ASSIST.

On tape the information is only updated bi-annually. This means that when we get ASSIST on-line, counselors will still not have up-to-date data at their finger tips.

I often get a paper version of an articulation agreement many months before it appears in ASSIST.

SECTION IV - OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF ASSIST
(Separate Progress Check Questions are in Section VI)

11. What is your assessment of the Campus Information component of ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Do not really use this component so can't evaluate.

Never use it(2).

Almost never use it.

Not all that useful and difficult to enter with the word processing program provided by the database.

We do not use the Campus Information component. It is not up-to-date. The college catalogs are much more accurate and useful.

Not necessarily useful to counselors but will be useful when more assessable to students.

Do not use this component, I usually use catalogs.

Counselors reactions to this are varied. Some who use it think it's great. Several have only used it in a limited manner. One staff member pointed out that catalogs are more up-to-date, complete and interesting to look at. (That is critical from a student perspective.)

Not necessary, no one here uses it, very time consuming to up-date.

Personally do not use it however, if students could have direct access to ASSIST I feel that they would use it.

Although Campus Information data was entered at one time, there was no evidence of its successful use by students.

12. Please list the top three strengths and weaknesses you have experienced with ASSIST.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Easy Access to current articulation info.	*Not all universities put articulation in by major which is useful* *Not all universities maintain updated agreements*
Good electronic repository for historical data on UCOP list and course changes	
Increase in number of articulation agreements with 4 year schools. *Easy access to other colleges-UC Transfer List and IGETC* *More accuracy in individual college to college articulation*	*Lack of accurate data from CSU -i.e. breadth lists (is being fixed)* *Moving about system is cumbersome and time consuming.* *Still not user friendly enough for counselors to embrace.*
Single electronic source for articulation and progress check information. *Ability to access articulation data between schools*	*Somewhat labor intensive in terms of maintenance.* *Ideal functioning requires*

other than your own.	*considerable support from schools own MIS personnel, especially initially.*
Ability to access data from CSU Chancellors Office and UC Office of the President	
Program - to - program	*Not all schools participate*
Course-to-course	*Not all schools participate completely, even when they do participate*
Accessibility	*We are bound to hard copies which are expensive to reproduce for all departments. The cost of a stand-alone can be expensive.*
Consistent articulation and progress check info. *Increased student responsibility and involvement.* *It provides immediate & consistent information*	*Does not handle UC transfer limits* *Maintenance time and effort is extensive.* *Requires high level of support staff and maintenance.*
Useful data *Good format* *Help given when needed.*	*Local inability to network ASSIST to counselors.*
Articulation data base, uniform format, articulation with schools outside of region, IGETC, and soon CSU Cert lists.	*Articulation data base needs to be expanded. In my region, I would like to see ASSIST articulation for UCLA CSULB, an CSULA. Also, I wish independent colleges like USC, Chapman, Biola, Whittier, and Loyola were involved.*
Articulation is displayed in more than one format i.e. department and major *ASSIST staff is friendly and always responsive. Also, regional user group meetings are helpful.*	
Counselors and students have access to a large amount of information in one place	*It's not completely up-to-date. Some agreements are available in hard copy for several months before they're available on ASSIST.*

It is accurate.

It provides articulation between other colleges

Good information and very useful

Easy access

Up to date
Articulation Information is displayed in an easy to use format.

ASSIST has promoted collaboration among CSU's, UC's, CCC's

Having Official information on file.

Do not have to research catalogs.
Information can be disseminated to students.

On-line access centralized all UC/CSU articulation download data and make available to counselors and students.
Staff at ASSIST-UCI always helpful.

Promotes development of articulation and CAN.

Promotes transfer by providing current, consistent information

Computer access is slow. (Time to log on, register etc.)
It's not as "user friendly" as Windows type of environment.

Not all CSU and UC articulation info. available (we don't have Internet)

The system is complicated to update.
We've had turnovers in our ASSIST clerical position and it takes new people too long to get up to speed.
Two of our biggest transfer institutions do not use ASSIST.
ASSIST requires too much support from computer services dept., support that they do not have time to give.

Not all 4 year public schools use ASSIST.

Lack of documentation for maintenance.

Need transfer to new platform-C++.
Revelation software continues to be a problem.
Expensive to make available with technology available at our campus.
Bugs in systems and updates

Lack of ability of Coordinating Committee to communicate effectively over the years resulting in late distribution of funds.

Cost of software and maintenance.
Support from ACS office.

13. Other Comments?

RESPONSES

The UC transfer lists and IGETC lists from other colleges have been of great value to our transcript evaluator. She uses ASSIST to evaluate all incoming transcripts. This is a great time saver and results in accuracy.

ASSIST runs on a single PC in the Transfer Center, Counselors each have a VAX terminal in their office. For the most part, accessing ASSIST articulation on our campus is most efficient via the paper forms and Internet.

Overall, most counselors had positive views about ASSIST. Most plan to use ASSIST more in the future, and feel it will be invaluable if it is even more up-to-date and is put in a more "user friendly" environment.

Incredible all-around improvement last 4 years.

You or the students do not have to call the 4-year school to get authorization to use a course to fulfill transfer requirement.

SECTION V - PROGRESS CHECK USERS ONLY

14. Is Progress Check used routinely at your campus/district for: (Check all that apply):

RESPONSES

CSU GE Certifications *(2); Some; Cyclically during semesters by few counselors*

IGETC Certifications *(2); Some; Cyclically during semesters by few counselors*

AA/AS degree evaluations *(2); Some; Cyclically during semesters by few counselors*

4-Year Transfer Progress

Other CC Cert. Programs *(2); Some; Cyclically during semesters by few counselors*

NOT USED ROUTINELY *(6); Not used currently;*

15. Is student transcript data downloaded automatically into ASSIST Progress Check?

RESPONSES

No (5); Yes (4) Was at one time;

16. Why did your campus/district choose to use Progress Check?

RESPONSES

We wanted to use the Progress Check and were able to fund the programming required to make it available. Its usefulness to us was marginal since two of our major transfer colleges did not use the Progress Check. We used it experimentally with UCSC only, then discontinued its use when mainframe hardware changed. We would like to re-initiate Progress Check.

Students could routinely check their status and, when meeting with a counselor, have more time to discuss options as opposed to catalog search (2)

Students can get information on their own.

At counselors request; sounded like a faster and more accurate method than "paper and pencil" but not so.

Chose to use Progress Check to provide students with accurate information on their progress toward meeting CSU and IGETC requirements. It is a way to quickly review this information so counselors can discuss other transfer issues with them.

To provide students with quick, consistent information regarding their transfer progress (2).

It was the least expensive option with the best potential (in our estimation).

Wanted to enable counselors and graduation clerk to perform "grad checks" electronically.

Thought it would be a good tool for advising students.

17. Approximately how many counselors at your campus/district use Progress Check?

RESPONSES

None (3); 3(2); 1; All; 6;

At this time progress checks are not being run. We are actively working toward producing them once again. We plan to initially have 4 full-time counselors use them during their student appointments.

18. Do students at your campus/district have direct access to Progress Check on-line?

RESPONSES

No(7); Yes (2)

19. How do students benefit from Progress Check?

RESPONSES

It provides them with a handy printout showing which requirements have been completed and which are remaining.

Students can request a Progress Check in the transfer center and it will be run for them. It is also provided for all students meeting with a representative.

Consistent evaluations "on demand"; access to articulation from other schools.

Not much now but should improve when accessible to students.

Students are asked to run progress check prior to making a counselor appointment. Students receive information about requirements competed and courses still needed.

It provides them with a printed record of their progress toward meeting CSU and/or IGETC requirements.

Graduation, IGETC, CSU Breadth, if updated.

20. How do counselors benefit from Progress Check?

RESPONSES

Time saver

At the present, they are not benefiting.

It removes them from boring clerical tasks and protects them to a certain degree, from errors.

When available on all counselor computers with the capacity to print, should be very helpful tool in assisting students.

Counselors see students after the student has run a Progress Check. They do not have to spend time counting units or figuring out GPA's.

Counselors do not have to take the time to "hand check" progress. This leaves more time to discuss other transfer, financial aid, personal, career, and performance issues.

Not sure, some counselors can do pencil-paper check faster because of their knowledge and experience. The Dept. as a whole could be using it more, we have discussed this but no person-power to implement additional uses of this information.

Accuracy and detail are superior to manual process-if transcript data is updated.

21. Counselors at my Campus/District use Progress Check: (Check One)

RESPONSES

On-line *(1)*

In paper form *(2); All use some sort of paper form, but not in ASSIST format.*

Both *(2)*

22. Do you trust that the data in Progress Check is accurate and up-to-date?

RESPONSES

Yes (3); No (4); Uncertain; Yes, with knowledge of the limitations;

22a. If yes, what gives you this assurance?

RESPONSES

We update it and try to correct any glitches that show up.

Schools seem to be careful about submitting accurate data to ACS.

I have reviewed information for accuracy.

We have been improving the Progress Check for the past 11 years. This has required consistent information regarding the title and unit value of all courses throughout the entire college.

Process for input and pre-testing done.

22b. If no, why not?

RESPONSES

In the past, data has not been correctly used on Progress Checks. PCATS may have been entered incorrectly, our MCD may have been incorrect., or ASSIST may not have been programmed to handle situations that are specific to our campus.

Too many student printouts have errors in them. This is especially the case with CSU GE since the system can't account for courses coming off the list. Courses which are in more than one area are frequently used in the wrong area.

District is way behind in installing student grade information.

I haven't kept up on checking accuracy of current course list and have not set a regular time frame for giving changes to the technician.

We have had a difficult time converting our catalog to the ASSIST process.

Student transcript data is old.

23. Has the use of Progress Check on-line or in paper form: (Answer each question)

- **reduced counselors' time in serving students?**

No (6) *Yes;* *A little*

- **increased information shared with students in counseling sessions?**

No (3) *Yes (5)*

- **increased the number of students served per counselor?**

No (6); *Uncertain*

23a. If yes to any above, please describe how:

RESPONSES

ON LINE

It takes time to "manipulate" ASSIST and for the program to do its work, there isn't a lot of time "saved". However, the information is more consistent and accurate.

Many students find that their questions regarding transferable units and GPA are answered once they run a progress check.

ASSIST can provide more information quicker for students.

It is a bit of a time saver for native students, but we still have to go over and explain the printout and we still see the same numbers of students in 1/2 hr appointments.

PAPER FORM

When counselors are given hard copy of ASSIST evaluations, they can spend more time focusing on other student concerns

Many students find that their questions regarding transferable units and GPA are answered once they run a progress check.

The review of CSU/IGETC certification progress is more efficient using ASSIST. More time can be spent helping students with other concerns.

ASSIST has better readability.

23b. If yes to any above, please estimate the net gain in annual counseling capacity resulting from the use of Progress Check at your campus/district. Express your response in terms of the number of positions, i.e., one-half PY, one PY, etc.:

RESPONSES

0 PY's (2); 1/4 PY's

24. Please list the top three strengths and weaknesses you have experienced with Progress Check.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Should save time	*CSU GE is not accurate*
	Only one pass at transcript means that courses used in more than one area are often misplaced.
	No distinction between UC transferability and CSU transferability of courses.
Quick	*Reports only our courses*
Convenient	*Report format not consistent with other campus " check sheets"*
Consistent, inexpensive	*Report has a few undesirable features, e.g., reports an "in progress" course when a completed course is available.*
Readily available source of information	*Lack of District support*
Easy for student to understand.	
Consistent information	*Some errors still exist*
Direct and quick student access.	*Same as above. Not user friendly.*
Provides students with a printed individualized record of their progress.	*ASSIST is not able to be customized for individual campus needs or "idiosyncrasies"*

Increases efficiency in counseling sessions, leaving time for other issues and concerns.

Although modifications are made in the program when there is general agreement for the need, implementation of changes is very slow.

Funding is uncertain, it makes it difficult for participating campuses to make plans.

Counselors complain of access time to progress check.

GPA/Transferable units/quarter/semester unit Info.

Student transcript data is not updated.

Evaluation is clear, semester taken, grade earned is good.

Options are able to be printed out

Progress check is useful for native students for grad checks and certificates.

Can use progress check only for students who have transcripts for our campus or another ASSIST college.

Useful for list of requirements for AA/AS degrees

Programming in Revelation and having no enhancements.

Difficulty in getting transcript data from our district in a timely manner.

25. Other Comments on Progress Check?

RESPONSES

Needs enhancements that ASSIST participants requested 1 1/2 - 2 years ago.

Student transcript data is not updated.

We are a multi-college district. The other colleges course list are not incorporated with our Progress check yet, we use a single, district wide transcript. So, the Progress Check starts out incomplete. This discourages most counselors.

The ASSIST staff is great, I have always found them to be very responsive, helpful, and friendly.

Unit totals in summary always seem to be screwed up. Students can never understand this. All progress checks that we do have to be checked for accuracy before we give them to students and this is very time consuming.

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS RECEIVED

College ASSIST Representatives-Colleges New to ASSIST

Ventura College
Jeff Ferguson, Articulation Officer

Chabot College
Merv Maruyama, Articulation Officer

College Of the Redwoods
Gary Valdi, Coordinator Counselor/Articulation Officer

Santa Rosa Junior College
Margy Austin, Articulation Officer

Los Medanos College
Art Alatorre, Matriculation

Diablo Valley College
Marilyn Christenson, Articulation

Modesto Junior College
Shirlee Adams, Articulation Officer

Imperial Valley College
Ralph Marquez, Transfer Center Director/Assistant Manager

Los Angeles City College
Evelyn Hasegawa, Articulation Officer

Cypress College
Thomas, J. Cooper, Transfer Center Director

Yosemite Community College District
Elsie Bruno, Counselor/Articulation Officer /ASSIST Campus Manager

Allan Hancock College
Christine Jennings, Transfer Center Coordinator

San Diego City College
Peggy F. Hayward, Dean, Student Development

Mira Costa College
Mary Jennings-Smith, Transfer & Articulation Coordinator

Project ASSIST Evaluation Survey

COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSIST REPRESENTATIVES

Community Colleges New to ASSIST in 1996

SECTION I - BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

1. Why did your campus/district choose to use ASSIST?

RESPONSES

We chose ASSIST in order to have more articulation information available. We wanted to have a Networking system and ASSIST was easy to use. We also wanted to add to the program with our own agreements

To be more efficient in providing updated, accurate information quickly to students.(2)

We were convinced from our observations of other users that it would be a valuable articulation and planning tool for our counselors and students. We felt it was of value because of the amount of participants

Because it is a statewide intersegmental database of articulation for California institutions of which we are a part.

Because it is non-profit and state supported fiscally and in goals and spirit. To provide easy access to full statewide articulation information for students on demand and on-line, for transfer staff to help students, and for counselors to better advise and provide students with academic planning.

Money, i.e. potential grants; service to students and staff; real time articulation; articulation otherwise unavailable.(2)

To utilize articulation information and to have access to current info for our counseling network system.

Excellent service for our students, faculty and staff.

To have automated access to the most up-to-date information possible. To supplement our existing articulation system.

Opportunity for free access of data.

To develop a degree audit system.

Project ASSIST sent out letters asking if we would like to join the project.

We needed a centralized systematic articulation process. The currency of our articulation agreements was becoming more and more problematic.

2. Approximately how many students at your campus/district transfer to UC or CSU each year?

RESPONSES

550; 377 students in 1994-95 to CSU; 3 to UC; 300-400/yr; 100; See CPEC Report; 300; 1,100; 200+ 1,940; 800; 270; 100 to UC, 400 to CSU; 331 in 94/95;

3. Approximately how many counselors at your campus/district will use ASSIST?

RESPONSES

10, including EOP's and DGP's; 20+; 5 Campus, 20 district; 2 currently, eventually 20+; 12+; 48 including part-time; 30; 10; 18; 4-5 now, eventually all will use; 25-30; 15; 8; 6 F/T, 5 P/T; 2 auxiliary counselors , 1 counseling assistant

4. Will students at your campus/district have direct access to ASSIST on-line?

RESPONSES

Yes (6); No (3); Not at this time; Do not know at this time; Eventually; Not until new infrastructure is installed (96/97);

SECTION II - BENEFITS OF ASSIST

5. How do you expect students will benefit from ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Easy access to more articulation agreements. Community College students often change colleges and this allows them to check prior college's articulation agreements.

Accurate complete information on CSU and UC Courses as well as CCC.

They will become more personally involved in developing educational plans, become more knowledgeable of transfer course choices, as a result make better more informed decisions. This should result in less time necessary to complete transfer preparation.

Have immediate access to accurate up-to-date articulation data for educational planning.(4)

Students will have easy and complete access to statewide articulation to help interrelate their college experience and plan for completion of degrees through transferring to a 4-year college.

Students can scan majors offered at different schools for "what if" transfer majors.

Students will have a clear listing of articulated courses.

Up-to-date information on home campus and others in the state.

Articulation information made available when needed, counselor appointment not required.

Enhance student transfer success with accurate articulation information.

Better organization and currency of agreements.

6. How do you expect counselors will benefit from ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Unofficial evaluations of transcripts from other colleges will be more accurate. Easier access to articulation agreements, and large files with information will not need to be kept in offices.

Easier access to CSU, UC, and CCC information on-line.

Better guidance for students, ensure accuracy and consistency of articulation information. Also allows for more free time to delve into other areas of concerns that students have. It will additionally help us identify further articulation options. (2)

Less paper work, cut costs, and immediate access to accurate and up-to-date articulation information for educational planning.

Full current statewide articulation to help interrelate their college experiences and plan for completion of degrees through transferring to a 4-year college.

Accurate, thorough articulation data, uniform interpretation of data; and real time data and quick changes.

Depending on CSU participation they can access accurate information in one place.

Counselors will have ability to access transfer major data to advise students.

Information provided will be more current/accurate and counselor can be confident when providing it. (2)

Being able to provide students with more information.

Quicker access to articulation information.

7. Counselors at my Campus/District will use ASSIST: (Check One)

RESPONSES

On-line *(3)*

In paper form

Both *(11)*

8. I expect the use of ASSIST on-line or in paper form will: (Answer each question)

RESPONSES

- **reduce counselors' time in serving students?** *Yes (7); No (5)*

  To some extent; Some

- **increase information shared with students in counseling sessions?** *Yes (14)*

- **increase the number of students served per counselor?** *No(5); Yes (5)*

  Not sure; Possibly; Not applicable;

8a. If yes to any above, please describe how you believe ASSIST will accomplish each objective:

RESPONSES

ON LINE:

At present, counselors have to leave their offices and go to the Transfer Center with a student to get copies of agreements. With ASSIST on line, they will not be wasting time getting paper copies.(2)

Availability to print will reduce time once newer CPU's are in place.

Reduce time by not having to search through voluminous piles of articulation agreements, increase information by getting the whole picture at the push of a button, it will increase the number of students served because the students will be better informed resulting in less time spent by counselors.(2)

Have information more up to date, in more than on format (dept., major, etc.)

Counselors can look at a number of schools and majors in working with transfer students.

With up to date information, counselors can be sure they are giving correct advise to students.

Easier access to more information.

Allows for more time for students to discuss other pertinent information with counselors

Quicker access to articulation agreements.

Not available at this time.

Project ASSIST data will be accessible (eventually) on site in each counselor's office.

Less manipulation, finding, storing articulation documents. More data is available that is readily available on demand which is up to date and complete statewide. Because of this, time with students is more efficiently spent and will allow for shorter appointments and allow students to see counselors.

PAPER FORM

Counselors can print copies for students as they need it; not wasting of paper and printing costs should go down.(2)

Reduce time by not having to search through voluminous piles of articulation agreements, increase information by getting the whole picture at the push of a button, it will increase the number of students served because the students will be better informed resulting in less time spent by counselors.

Can increase number and length of course to course lists and major preparation list for students use.

Students have something to take with them to review and help with future planning. (2)

Some counselors still feel more comfortable using hard copy rather than computers.

Rip-Off displays and open storage racks will make articulation agreements handy for advisement sessions. (New racks are already purchased)

We are dependent on this format until we have the means to get all counselors on-line.

8b. If yes to any above, please estimate the net gain in <u>annual</u> counseling capacity you expect to result from the use of ASSIST at your campus/district. Express your response in terms of the number of positions, i.e., one-half PY, one PY, etc.:

0.5 PY's; 0 PY's (2); Can't estimate (5); 1/2 PY's; 1/4 PY's, although, this is not definite because we just started.

Unable to determine, all counseling appointments are scheduled for 1/2 hour. May help in drop-in appointments which are maximum 10 minutes.

0 PY's, counselors can provide student more accurate articulation information. This will leave time for students to discuss the more personal aspect of the counseling session (i.e. will UC Berkeley or UC Riverside be better for me?)

SECTION III - RELIABILITY OF ASSIST DATA

9. Do you trust that the data in ASSIST will be accurate and up-to-date?

RESPONSES

Yes (3); Hopefully; Unsure (2); Have concerns; Reasonably so;

I expect it to be accurate and up to date; Not familiar enough with ASSIST to answer;

Somewhat; Mostly, but not completely.

9a. If yes, what gives you this assurance?

RESPONSES

Commitment of all segments as well as ASSIST staff.

I trust the quality assurance of project ASSIST.

The update process in place to ensure accurate information.

Updated twice a year.

The changes that have been implemented in the process and the positive comments from other users at ASSIST meetings.

Varies according to campus resources and the amount of articulation that exists with a particular school.

I trust the ASSIST staff, and I know CSU and UC staff are eager to have accurate current and thorough information.

Discussion with current users and impressions of staff.

ASSIST staff and Board of Directors professional work and integrity.

A lot of attention and resources have been designated to this project.

All members want ASSIST to work. It won't unless we do all our job to maintain the integrity of ASSIST.

9b. If no, why not?

RESPONSES

Commitment of administration to articulation officer's time to keep data up to date; lack of support staff.

Depends which schools enter data and how often they update. We are the main transfer school for Sonoma State and they are not using ASSIST.

Depending on the CSU participation.

We are just getting into ASSIST and thus it is an untested commodity for us. Also, there is a tremendous amount of data to keep organized and accurate.

SECTION IV - OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF ASSIST IMPLEMENTATION TO DATE

10. Please list the top three strengths and weaknesses you have experienced in your implementation of ASSIST.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Support from Project ASSIST Staff	*Time to devote toward implementation*
	Limited staff resources assigned to project.
	Did not get all schools or individual agreements on the first installation.
Installation was easy	*Lack of space and equipment*
Being implemented currently, unable to asses implementation (2).	*CSU system wide does not participate at the same level.*
	Updates not done for all campuses
Support from own computer support services dept.(2)	*Quality of data inconsistent from school to school*
	Experienced a delay in implementation
Good setup of information	*Installation information not correct*
Program is good; useful utilities	*Runs only with Revelation and DOS*
Instructions in tour books are easy to read and follow.	*No graphical interface and requires large disk space.*
	Need to buy LAN pack at $700 for 5

users.

Will provide more current agreements with less difficulty

Some info. out of data.

Excellent tool for counselors to use when counseling

Lack of technical staff at local campus

Easy to access and more thorough information

ASSIST on the Internet is slow and awkward to use.

Immediate access to articulation and campus info.

To much red tape with the District when it comes to implementing a new program

Potential of accurate up to date articulation being only one month behind through ASSIST on the Internet.

Lots of articulation in place

Will save lots of paper for hard copies and time for counselor (manual articulation)

Student can access without counselor.

Working with Computer Specialist, project ASSIST team and Articulation Coordinator

11. Other Comments?

RESPONSES

I am so impressed with the help and support I have received from the ASSIST coordination site in helping me to implement the articulation subsystem.

Overall, relatively smooth process due to help from support staff, computer support services department and project managers.

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS RECEIVED

ASSIST Technical Support Staff-Colleges Using ASSIST

Butte College
Ruth De Tro, Assistant Data Manager/Technician

Laney College
Chi Au, Data Specialists

Foothill - DeAnza Community College District
Jim Clow, Programmer/Analyst III

Irvine Valley College
Kathy Paukstis, Counselor/Project Assist Manager

Rancho Santiago College
Paula Begin, University Articulation Cordinator

Santa Barbara City College
Arleen Stagat, Project ASSIST Coordinator

Los Angeles Harbor Communtity College
Brenda Guertin, Articulation Officer

Project ASSIST Evaluation Survey Results

ASSIST TECHNICAL SUPPORT STAFF
Community Colleges Using ASSIST before 1996

1. Please estimate the total number of hours you spend each year providing services related to Project ASSIST.

RESPONSES

200 hrs; 560 hrs; 200 hrs; 1440 hrs; 12 hrs; did not estimate

1,100 (part time 20/hrs. wk. x 11 months = 1,100 hrs. yr.

1a. Of these, how many are required to complete the semi-annual database update?

RESPONSES

24 hrs; 96 hrs/yr; 50 hrs; 4 hrs; did not estimate; 1 month

2. In addition to your involvement, what other MIS staff support is required to keep ASSIST working at your campus/district? (Please describe the type and level of assistance)

RESPONSES

MIS support: installations of distribution data and downloading of transcripts. District: creates periodic transcript and tracking files at our request. MIS staff : installations on local computer and network.

Data Processing Department: develop VAX program reports that are meaningful for ASSIST Articulation database maintenance/updates. Electronic Maintenance Department: upgrades/performance of ASSIST stand-alone computer and software installations/updates.

Online transcript download, 5 hours/yr.

MIS staff support: copying files to the file server, maintaining staff and counselor access, and providing catalog information.

System Analyst: Security, scripts, disk storage. Network personnel: communication line.

Information Resources Department worte original program on HP3000 Reflection script for job streasming all student's demographic and transcript information for inprogress courses, grades which I manually request then download - convert to ASSIST. We need further programming to have direct on-line access to current student information. They perfomr nightly backups of the network files campus wide.

3. Based on your experience, please list the strengths and weaknesses of ASSIST from the perspective of technical assistance requirements.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS	*WEAKNESSES*
Good support and trouble shooting is provided by ACS. (3)	*Updates, downloading, and conversion of transcript and tracking data are time consuming. (2)*
Availability of informative data at finger-tips.(2)	*Inefficient word processing program Constrictive Revelation program language.(2)*
Good centralized articulation system (2)	*Progress check, data structure, course maintenance interface, navigation interface, access procdures.*
Detailed information	*At mercy of MIS staff and willingness and ability to help*
Ease of use	*Have not had clean database update*
	DOS based
Powerful database - able to create progress check with GPA and unit calculations.	*Not user friendlly - DOS environment slow learning curve to master ASSIST large requiring a huge chunk of resources. We share fib server.*

Time consuming to set up progress checks/indexing hug fibs.
Documentation lacking - user is more or less on thier own unless they contact coordination site.
When any indexing or huge job (download) is running on ASSIST other useres have or may be effected by a lsow down of thier computers as we share file server.

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS RECEIVED

ASSIST Technical Support Staff-Colleges New to ASSIST

Chabot - Los Positas
John McHugh, Network Services Specialist

Los Medanos College
Bob Skapura, Director of Learning Resources

Cypress College
Thomas Cooper, Transfer Center Director-Articulation Officer

Los Angeles City College
Arual Pascua, Sr. Microcomputer Systems Specialist

Modesto Junior College/Yosemite Community College District
Felicia Osnaya, Software Technician

Santa Rosa Junior College
Patrick McFadin, Network Administrator

Columbia College
Nelsa Paulson, DPA

Diablo Valley College
Jerry Underwood, Director of Computer and Media Services

Imperial Valley College
Ralph Marquez, Transfer Center Director/Assistant Manager

Allan Hancock College
Terry Got, Director of Computer Services

San Diego Community College District
Peggy F. Hayward

Mira Costa College
Mary Jennings-Smith, Transfer & Articulation Coordinator

Project ASSIST Evaluation Survey Results

ASSIST TECHNICAL SUPPORT STAFF
Community Colleges New to ASSIST in 1996

1. **Please estimate the total number of hours do you spend each year providing services related to Project ASSIST.**

RESPONSES

did not estimate; 80hrs spent, 60hrs expected; 26 hrs; 30hrs; 30hrs; 25hrs; 100+hrs; 20hrs; 20+hrs; 3-4hrs 40hrs spent; 80hrs; 40 hrs MIS; 60 hrs.; 100hrs.

2. **In addition to your involvement, what other MIS staff support is required to keep ASSIST working at your campus/district? (Please describe the type and level of assistance)**

RESPONSES

Technical staff: wire the counseling center, connect interface cards, and configure network, and assist when problems come up.

District data center: programming assistance to produce course files (2)

Maintenance on an ongoing basis of network system.

Two programmers for the software and one technical support person for hardware installation.

Electrical technician: hardware upgarades. Software technician:system problems that would degrade the performance of ASSIST. Install has been completed for stand-a-lone and LAN.

One hardware tech and one software support person: install all hardware and network computer and printer to current administrative network. Repair/troubleshoot any hardware and software problem.

Computer support personnel: installing of PC hardware on maintenance computer. Programmer: Data extract

Systems Software Analyst, Microcomputer specialist, Manager of technical support

Write Extract programs for database information. Send output to ASSIST, edit and report back. Install software, run systems. A few schools were missing.

None

LAN Management - Networking to VAX Host

Computer Technician - Connectivity of Users - Upgrade of Equipment

Computer Operator - Data Entry Database Management

District MIS Manager and Tech: Install software on district files server; produce course lists.

3. **Based on your experience, please list the strengths and weaknesses of ASSIST from the perspective of technical assistance requirements.**

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS	*WEAKNESSES*
ACS has good support staff (6)	*Documentation out of date (not consistant with diskette) (2)* *Quality control on data distributed.*
Good clear installation instructions (3)	*None found yet*
Meetings to update participants *Organized program full of info needed by colleges & students.*	*Not enough doucmentation. (2)* *Unclear, incomplete installation directions.* *Primitive program displays & presentations*
Installation was Petty Cash	*Outdated text -based program.* *needs better graphics & fonts.*
Easy access to articulation information	*No graphical user interface.* *Slow response from tech support.*
Unable to comment	*Difficult interface for users.*
Amount of articulation online. (2) *A-F list.* *Information from other community*	*DOS based program.* *Lan Packs are required to access for more than one station*

Colleges

Didn't get all schools on first installation.

We are just now implementing Project ASSIST.

Managing ASSIST with a 3 college district is cumbersome.

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS RECEIVED

District MIS Representatives-Districts Using ASSIST

San Diego
Jeffrey B. Mills, Instructional Services Supervisor

Siskiyous
Dennis Engdahl, MIS

Sierra
Lawrence Lee, Assistant VP Information Technologies

Cabrillo
Alan G. Holbert, Computing Resources

Peralta
Dominique Pfagf, Sr. Program Analyst

North Orange County
Tom Wallace, Technical Support Manager

Santa Barbara City College
Bill Hamre, Chief Information Officer

Project ASSIST Evaluation Survey

DISTRICT MIS REPRESENTATIVES
Community Colleges USING ASSIST

1. Are you familiar with the transfer assistance functionality (counseling support) available through Project ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Yes(4); Only peripherally; Somewhat; No

1a. If "Yes", please list up to three strengths and weaknesses you have observed.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS/ADVANTAGES	WEAKNESSES/DISADVANTAGES
Improves student transfer planning; (3)	*Lack of available data from UC & CSU's* *Staff required for data management* *Complexity of reporting options*
Automates Articulation	*Too much data entry needed for benefits received*
Does "what it" scenarios	*Character based interface instead of GUI*
Provides incentives for schools to articulate	*Too much computer power needed*
Provides articulation information & degree requirements (2)	*Incomplete participation by UC, CSU, & CC*
Provides on-line services	*Text based design*
Easily used by counseling staff	*Arcane programming language* *Updating must be done by computer professional* *Space consumption*
Runs on common computer equipment	*Problems loading software*

2. Are you familiar with the system/implementation requirements of Project ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Yes (5) Somewhat; No;

2a. If "Yes", please list up to three strengths and weaknesses you have observed.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS/ADVANTAGES	***WEAKNESSES/DISADVANTAGES***
Centralized distribution of Articulation data	*Lack of integration with student records*
Centralized software development	*Complexity of managing program requirements*
	Maintaining listings of available data
	Lack of technical documentation
May be installed on local area network-Multi-user(2)	*Streaming tape backup/restore process is cumbersome and error laden (2)*
	Data handling features are archaic & limit integration with other systems (2)
	Two system (one for maintenance and one for users) installation is cumbersome
	Archaic Language
	Too many files needed-use to much disk (2)
Inexpensive equipment needed	*High memory requirement*
	Update difficult
Helpful technical support staff	*Problems with loading database*
Helpful in setting up initial course list file	
MS DOS platform	
	Lack of participation between UC's , CSU's & CC's

3. Do you know why your district chose to use ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Yes (7)

3a. If "Yes", please explain.

RESPONSES

Student empowerment to make decisions concerning future educational directions.(3)

Need for inter-segmental transfer information among counselors, articulation officers, and students.

Computerized articulation would assist with problems of limited staff.

Dean of Students was previously involved with ASSIST before transferring to this college

Other community colleges were using it.

4. Was your District MIS department a key influence in the choice?

RESPONSES

No(3) *Yes (2)*

5. Do you believe ASSIST functions efficiently at your district?

RESPONSES

Yes/No *No(4)* *Yes(2)*

5a. If "Yes", what systems integration, enhancements, networking, etc., contributes to this efficiency?

RESPONSES

Network implementation to 8 student walk-up stations

Networking and ease of use for simple tasks

Seems to run well as we are not called to resolve problems very often

5b. If "No", why do believe ASSIST does not function efficiently?

RESPONSES

Package was not developed for a multi-college district where most students have taken classes at several campuses by the time they graduate.
Our counselors are techno-phobic.

Lack of integration with student and course data.

Repeated difficulties with maintenance of ASSIST at the campuses, are looking to centralize maintenance at District Headquarters and campuses will concentrate on querying the ASSIST information.

Too labor intensive for benefit received.

Not widely used, only the Articulation Officers actively use it.

6. **Overall, do you believe ASSIST is effective in making articulation information readily available to counselors and students?**

RESPONSES

No (3) *Yes (2)* *Yes/No* *Don't know--campus function*

6a. If "Yes", what have been the critical success factors in your implementation of ASSIST?

RESPONSES

This part of the package is used by the Articulations Officer, she relies on the accuracy of the data downloaded from Irvine.

Persistence, commitment by counseling.

6b. If "No", why do you believe ASSIST is not effective?

RESPONSES

Missing data and has not been updated in several years and lacks the design enhancements and intuitive functioning of today's GUI programs.

Easier to do by hand.

Because no counselors are using it, students are not widely affected.

SECTION III - AVAILABILITY AND USE OF ARTICULATION DATA

7. Is there any relationship between articulation information and other functions and services supported by your existing or planned information systems?

RESPONSES

No Yes(5) Not currently, but planned

7a. If "Yes", please describe how ASSIST impacts these relationships and fits in your information systems plans.

RESPONSES

Electronic transcript exchange with other community colleges.

Reviewing degrees, audit functionality. At this time we don't know how ASSIST will be involved.

Do not know since ASSIST is a black box system it may continue to stand alone until we find better, mo flexible systems

It is a standalone system which must have the course listing imported from our mainframe. Once ASSI has been re-written to function in a GUI environment and the databases are accessible by other system it will be much more useful. ASSIST is very difficult to integrate in its current state.

CCMISC is intending to proceed without ASSIST.

Student education plans.

8. Has ASSIST been installed on a network at your district?

RESPONSES

Yes(5) No Yes--at Fullerton, No--at Cypress College

8a. If "Yes", please estimate the total cost to acquire the software and install ASSIST on the network, including purchase costs and MIS/other district staff time.

RESPONSES

Don't know (5); $3,000; $8,000

8b. If "No", why has ASSIST not been put on a network?

RESPONSES

This is the first year with ASSIST and plan to implement it on the network in the near future.

9. Describe how course information is updated in ASSIST.

RESPONSES

This is in the process of being changed, our plan is to download course listings from our mainframe for our three colleges into ASSIST at District Headquarters. Staff in the Instructional Services office will update the information. Once the data is updated and integrated with the existing ASSIST data it will be copied onto the counseling LANs.

Course information is updated manually by the counseling office.

Batch download from the mainframe database.

No detail/knowledge of how its done.

By the Articulations officer.

Download from college database and corrected/updated by clerk.

SECTION IV - AVAILABILITY AND USE OF DEGREE AUDIT FUNCTIONALITY

10. Does your district currently use ASSIST's Progress Check function?

RESPONSES

No(4) Yes Very little Don't know

10a. If "Yes", describe how student transcript data is entered into ASSIST.

RESPONSES

Periodic update of student transcript data.

Real time application on the PC Network interfaces with mainframe CLCS program to get student data as needed.

11. Is there any relationship between degree audit functionality and other functions and services supported by your existing or planned information systems?

RESPONSES

No Knowledge; Yes (5) No

11a. If "Yes", please describe how ASSIST Progress Check impacts these relationships and fits in your information systems plans.

RESPONSES

We are looking to buy or develop a degree audit system and an educational plan system.

At this time we do not know how ASSIST will be/is involved.

Student electronic transcript from other community colleges.

We are working on a degree audit system but ASSIST and its project are not in the picture.(2)

12. Does your district/campus plan to acquire any other degree audit system?

RESPONSES

Yes(3); No(2); Possibly;

12a. If "Yes", please explain.

RESPONSES

A functional requirement in new system development is underway.

We need a system where classes taken at any campus can be evaluated for a degree at any campus within the district. We need to store the degree requirements for all colleges on one system.

We are working on a degree audit system.

We have a degree audit system purchased from Systems & Computer Technology (SCT) Corporation.

We are investigating other vendors.

SECTION V - Costs of ASSIST

13. Please estimate the annual costs for MIS services only, related to supporting Project ASSIST.

RESPONSES

If done, (based on when we tried it) $10,000 minimum; $2,500.00; Still evaluating;

Do not know; Not available; On hold

14. Can you suggest any projects which the consultant should use for comparison with Project ASSIST to assess the project's cost or benefits?

RESPONSES

Yes, contact Lee Belarmino at San Juaquin Delta Community College. He and Matt Rosen were contracted to develop a similar application by the State Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges;

No(3);

15. Additional comments or suggestions regarding Project ASSIST.

RESPONSES

Put it on the Internet (HTML front end).
Get Data from MIS data at Chancellor's Office.
Get Rid of revelation.

The ability to use one system (one database) to do degree evaluation for any college is paramount.

We are committed to the goals of the Project, but are disappointed with the progress to date--much of which is due to the inherent difficulties in coordinating articulation information electronically between the segments. We are especially dissatisfied with the use of the Revelation database engine which is proprietary and difficult to integrate with other management information systems. Every effort should be made to redesign ASSIST for an open systems environment. A GUI interface would help colleges who are inputting data into ASSIST and make the progress easier to use by staff and students.

Good ideas, carried out in ways that are difficult to maintain and deal with. Should be re-engineered brought up to date, opened up, ODBC compliant windows environment might help.

Need to shape ASSIST data with other degree and IT systems.

The community colleges need to be a part of the future design and evaluation process. We have found ASSIST's technical support to be very helpful in resolving problems.

16. Please suggest any persons or groups you believe we should contact regarding this evaluation.

RESPONSES

Articulation Officer (Adale Hamlett)

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS RECEIVED

District MIS Representatives-Districts New To Assist

Southwestern
Steve Bossi, Director, Computer Systems & Services

Sonoma
Bob Schooling, Director, Computer Services

Pasadena Area
Dale Pittman, Director-MIS

Gavilan
C.M. Arvizu, DP Manager

Chabot-Las Positas
Dr. William Threlfall, Chief of Information Services

Monterey Peninsula College
Sharon Coniglio, Dean of Students

Project ASSIST Evaluation Survey Results

DISTRICT MIS REPRESENTATIVES
Community Colleges NEW TO ASSIST

1. Are you familiar with the transfer assistance functionality available through Project ASSIST?

RESPONSES

No (4); Yes;

1a. If "Yes", please list up to three strengths and weaknesses you have observed.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS/ADVANTAGES	WEAKNESSES/DISADVANTAGES
Potential broad areas of information	*Dependence upon individual/institution to update*
Student access/self-help	*Old interface (visual)*
	Lack of ability to extract or interface with other systems

2. Are you familiar with the system/implementation requirements of Project ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Yes, in general; Yes; Not yet; No; Somewhat;

2a. If "Yes", please list up to three strengths and weaknesses you have observed.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS/ADVANTAGES	WEAKNESSES/DISADVANTAGES
Straight forward loading instructions	*Need for duplicate database areas*
	Need for runtime licenses
	Revelation database (runtime licenses)
	Had to upgrade server

Substantial technical resource requirement

3. Do you know why your district chose to use ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Yes (4); *No*

3a. If "Yes", please explain.

RESPONSES

To assist students/counseling with course transfer feasibility in hopes that it might lead into a degree certification audit capability.

Funding and training assistance.

Ability to have local access to articulation/transfer information. Potential integration with local educational planning modules.

Political reasons.

4. Was your District MIS department a key influence in the choice?

RESPONSES

Yes; No (4);

5. What do you consider the critical success factors for implementation of ASSIST in your district?

RESPONSES

Counselor training

Currency of articulation data itself

MIS and student services (counseling) interaction and having the funding and hardware available

Statewide data and support

User buy-in, support resources

6. Overall, do you believe ASSIST will be effective in making articulation information readily available to counselors and students?

RESPONSES

No; Substantial doubt; Yes(2) Who knows

6b. If "No", why do you believe ASSIST will not be effective?

RESPONSES

Though yes, there is a local issues that this will be a 3rd system for assisting the students educational plan

The majority of ASSIST users I've spoken to are not complementary of the system.

SECTION III - AVAILABILITY AND USE OF ARTICULATION DATA

7. Is there any relationship between articulation information and other functions and services supported by your existing or planned information systems?

RESPONSES

Yes (3); No; Do not have good means of outgoing articulation, had planned to build related database.

7a. If "Yes", please describe how ASSIST will impact these relationships and fits in your information systems plans.

RESPONSES

Current students records system and educational planning system now have intertransfer issues. ASSIST adds another level of complexity.

Interaction with the Curriculum module and, as mentioned earlier, hoped for use for degree/cert. audit.(2)

8. Will ASSIST be directly accessible to students on your District's campuses?

RESPONSES

Yes (2) *Unknown;* *Not in the plan;* *Not at this time;*

8a. If "Yes", how many terminals will be available to students?

RESPONSES

2 planned; *60+ PC's;*

8b. If "Yes", do you plan to officially monitor student use?

RESPONSES

Don't know; *Unknown at this time*

8c. If "No", why won't students have direct access to ASSIST?

RESPONSES

(No Repsonses)

9. Will ASSIST be directly accessible to counselors on your District's campuses?

RESPONSES

Yes (5)

9a. If "Yes", will ASSIST be available through each counselor's own PC?

RESPONSES

Yes (4); *Not initially;*

9b. If "Yes", do you plan to officially monitor counselor use?

RESPONSES

Other than when opened, no; No; Not personally; Do not know yet;

9c. If "No", why won't each counselor have direct access to ASSIST through their own personal computer?

RESPONSES

Each will eventually once equipment is upgraded and a network is installed.

SECTION IV - AVAILABILITY AND USE OF DEGREE AUDIT FUNCTIONALITY

10. Does your district hope to use ASSIST's Progress Check function?

RESPONSES

No (3); Don't know;

10a. If "Yes", please describe how student transcript data will be transferred to ASSIST.

RESPONSES

11. Is there any relationship between degree audit functionality and other functions and services supported by your existing or planned information systems?

RESPONSES

Yes; No; Don't know

11a. If "Yes", please describe how ASSIST Progress Check might impact these relationships and how it will fit in your information systems plans.

RESPONSES

It overlaps with an application we have already acquired and we are planning to implement that program, not ASSIST

12. Does your district/campus plan to acquire any other degree audit system?

RESPONSES

No (3) *Yes*

12a. If "Yes", please explain.

RESPONSES

Already own ?????

SECTION V - Costs of ASSIST

13. Please estimate the total costs for MIS services only, related to implementing Project ASSIST in your District.

RESPONSES

N/A; *$4,000;* *Approx. 10K (not networked);* *$25,000*

14. Please estimate the annual costs for MIS services only, related to supporting the articulation database component of Project ASSIST in your District.

RESPONSES

$1,000; *Don't know yet;* *N/A;* *$2,500 staff costs assuming quarterly updates;*

15. From your MIS perspective, how would you rank the information and services provided to you by the ASSIST Coordination Site staff at the ASSIST orientation (Circle One)?

Poor								Outstanding
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

RESPONSES

5(2); *7;* *10;*

16. Can you suggest any projects which the consultant should use for comparison with Project ASSIST to assess the project's cost or benefits?

RESPONSES

17. Additional comments or suggestions regarding Project ASSIST.

RESPONSES

Create ability to extract information from local systems

Look at maturity of product--problems are usually ironed out after five years.

18. Please suggest any persons or groups you believe we should contact regarding this evaluation.

RESPONSES

Counseling/articulation groups.

PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION
APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS RECEIVED

District MIS Representatives-Districts not using ASSIST

Riverside
Alta Hester, Counselor

Hartnell
Gary Hughes, Director-Data Processing

Kern County
Michael Budy, Director-MIS

Feather River
Donald Fregulia, Articulation Officer

Grossmont-Cuyamaca
Henry Eimstomo, Director-Information Systems

Sequoias
Tir Hollabaugh, Lead-Computer Services

Palo Verde College
Christine Smith, Registrar

Project ASSIST Evaluation Survey

DISTRICT MIS REPRESENTATIVES
Community Colleges NOT using ASSIST

SECTION II - ASSIST EVALUATION

1. **Are you familiar with the transfer assistance functionality available through Project ASSIST?**

RESPONSES

No (6) *Yes (2)*

1a. If "Yes", please list up to three strengths and weaknesses you have observed.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS/ADVANTAGES	WEAKNESSES/DISADVANTAGES
Continuity of format	
Timeliness of information	
Ease of access	
Articulation agreements	

2. **Are you familiar with the system/implementation requirements of Project ASSIST?**

RESPONSES

No (6) *Somewhat (1)* *No Response (1)*

2a. If "Yes", please list up to three strengths and weaknesses you have observed.

RESPONSES

STRENGTHS/ADVANTAGES	WEAKNESSES/DISADVANTAGES
	Time involved
	Funding involved
	Coordination/staffing needed

People and dollar resources not available at this small community college

3. Do you know why your district has chosen not to use ASSIST?

RESPONSES

Yes (4) *No (3)* *No Response (1)*

3a. If "Yes", please explain.

RESPONSES

1. *Time, money staffing and the fact that the project seemed overly complicated. Also, we were probably somewhat stuck in our present methods*
2. *People and dollar resources not available at this small community college. In addition to the memory and software requirements needed to be fully on line it seems to e that the need to update the data base twice a year is a redundant exercise since the information could be made available through the Internet. Articulation information on our campus is used mainly by counselors and advisors but chiefly by the articulation officer. The MIS personnel and the PC network administrator feel that personnel and money would be more efficiently directed to more pressing needs i.e. expanding the network to all instructors and students.*

4. Was your District MIS department a key influence in the choice?

RESPONSES

No (4) *N/A (2)* *Unknown (1)* *We Collaborated (1)*

Yes, but mainly a decision that was made by the PC administrator and the articulation office (1)

SECTION III - AVAILABILITY AND USE OF ARTICULATION DATA

5. Is there any relationship between articulation information and other functions and services supported by your existing or planned information systems?

RESPONSES

Yes (2) *No (5)* *No Response (1)*

5a. If "Yes", please explain.

RESPONSES

1. *We know it's possible to store the data in our HP3000-that is our intention. We are networked and can extend that function.*
2. *We would like the articulation function.*

6. Have you automated articulation information at your district?

RESPONSES

No (6) *No Response (1)* *No, we are hopeful that the information will be available through the Internet (1)*

6a. If "Yes", please describe the automated system used.

6b. If "Yes", is the information available on-line as an interactive tool for students' or counselors' use?

SECTION IV - AVAILABILITY AND USE OF DEGREE AUDIT FUNCTIONALITY

7. Is there any relationship between degree audit functionality and other functions and services supported by your existing or planned information systems?

RESPONSES

No (5) *Yes (1)* *No Response (1)*

7a. If "Yes", please explain.

RESPONSES

1. *CCCSC is looking at the Degree/Progress Check program now.*
2. *We are currently evaluating options through CEI, a Washington State based student information system; and Preeminence, a software company that may be able to address our need for on-line SEP as well as degree audit.*
3. *We have degree audit and it is integrated with one A&R/counseling functions.*

8. Does your district currently have or anticipate acquiring an automated degree audit system for checking progress toward AA/AS and/or four-year degree requirements?

RESPONSES

Yes (5) *No (2)* *No Response (1)*

8a. If "Yes", please describe the automated system used or planned for this purpose including the centers of major costs and implementation difficulties you have experienced or anticipate.

1. *We are currently evaluating options from CEI, a Washington State based student information system;and Preeminence, a software company that may be able to address our need for on-line SEP as well as degree audit.*
2. *Cost is a major problem.*
3. *CCCSC is looking at the Degree/Progress Check program now.*
4. *Locally developed.*
5. *Santa Rosa Consortium*
6. *May be developed in house. Difficulty in definition of requirement.*

8b. If "No", do you know why your district has chosen not to acquire a degree audit system? If "Yes", please explain.

9. Additional comments or suggestions regarding Project ASSIST.

RESPONSES

1. *I think it's a shame that funding did not accompany the initiation of Project ASSIST. To have a massive "system" that isn't fully operational is a loss to those not on board.*
2. *There has been narrow discussion on ASSIST. Sharing of information and the use of the "users" on development has been non-existent as far as I am concerned. The perception I have is that of little support and enthusiasm-which has led me to concentrate on other priorities.*
3. *The project objectives in my view are very good and can be of great value; but it seems to be a system that is geared to very large institutions and, at least in my opinion, much too complicated. I believe that students, as well as counselors, advisors and especially articulation personnel will be better served if the entire system was administered at the state level through the Internet or through a network developed for post secondary institutions throughout the state.*

10. Please suggest any persons or groups you believe we should contact regarding this evaluation.

APPENDIX B

Project ASSIST Strategic Plan

Project ASSIST Strategic Plan
November 27, 1996

Mission Statement

Project ASSIST's mission is to facilitate the transfer of California community college students to California's public 4-year universities by providing an electronic system for academic planning which delivers accurate, timely and complete information.

Vision Statement

Project ASSIST will become an integrated, student-centered information system which includes degree requirement information and is maintained as the official, complete repository of California articulation. This system will provide: 1) ubiquitous on-line access, 2) an open system supporting access by other information systems, and 3) electronic interaction between students and institutions.

Primary Goals
(for the next 2-3 years)

Goal 1: Secure broad-based commitment to and support of the mission and vision of Project ASSIST.

Goal 2: Establish ASSIST as the official, statewide repository of articulation and transfer information for the state of California.

Goal 3: Develop and implement procedures to ensure complete and comprehensive articulation and transfer information in ASSIST.

Goal 4: Utilize the established Technical Advisory Committee process to implement the Technology Plan to promote universal access to logically centralized applications and data using an open architecture, web browser clients, and modern database management system technology.

Secondary Goals
(for the next 2-3 years)

Secondary Goal 1: Assure the availability of a statewide transcript analysis tool by December 1999

Secondary Goal 2: Increase the use of ASSIST by students and counselors.

Objectives for Primary Goals

Goal 1: ***Secure broad-based commitment to and support of the mission and vision of Project ASSIST.***

Objective 1: The ASSIST Board of Directors shall complete and adopt a strategic plan.

Objective 2: The ASSIST Board of Directors shall communicate its adoption of the strategic plan to all campuses.

Objective 3: CCC/CSU/UC shall issue a statement endorsing Project ASSIST.

Objective 4: CCC/CSU/UC system-wide offices shall secure individual campus commitment 1) to the concept of ASSIST as the official repository of California articulation and statewide transfer information system; 2) to enter articulation by 4-year universities; and 3) to use ASSIST as an advising tool.

Objective 5: CCC/CSU/UC shall work jointly to maintain adequate funding for the project.

Objective 6: The ASSIST Board of Directors shall review and revise annually the goals and objectives for the Project as appropriate.

Objective 7: The ASSIST Board of Directors shall clarify and standardize its meeting procedures.

Goal 2: ***Establish ASSIST as the official, statewide repository of articulation and transfer information for the state of California.***

Objective 1: Define the elements and policies of the "official, statewide repository of California articulation and transfer information."

Objective 2: Adopt the definition of the official, statewide repository of California articulation and transfer information.

Objective 3: Obtain endorsement by each of the three public postsecondary segments.

Objective 4: Update and inform all public higher education institutions and other relevant higher education agencies/groups of ASSIST's plans to become the official repository of articulation and transfer information.

Goal 3: ***Develop and implement procedures to ensure complete and comprehensive articulation and transfer information in ASSIST.***

Objective 1: Identify procedures for implementation of a timely, on-going articulation update process.

Objective 2: Ensure all campuses adhere to the procedures.

Objective 3: Analyze the means to 1) reduce time from completion of articulation to the receipt of data at the ASSIST Coordination Site, 2) reduce time from receipt of data at the ASSIST Coordination Site to distribution to campuses, and 3) ensure timely access to data by campuses.

Objective 4: Develop activities to encourage the universities to submit data as it is updated.

Objective 5: Evaluate the relationship of emerging degree audit implementations to ASSIST to determine commonality for a positive relationship.

Objective 6: Add data to the database from universities who are not entering their own data.

Objective 7: Ensure complete submission and entry of all community college course list data.

Goal 4: ***Utilize the established Technical Advisory Committee process to implement the Technology Plan to promote universal access to logically centralized applications and data using an open architecture, web browser clients, and modern database management system technology.***

Objective 1: Adopt a specific database environment.

Objective 2: Adopt and communicate a web browser as the client for future access to ASSIST.

Objective 3: Convert/migrate ASSIST functionality to a new environment.

Objective 4. Assess representative campus-based information systems for linkages with articulation data in ASSIST.

Objectives for Secondary Goals

Secondary Goal 1: ***Assure the availability of a statewide transcript analysis tool by December 1999***

Objective 1: Define the requirements for a statewide transcript analysis tool.

Objective 2: Evaluate existing systems against requirements for a statewide transcript analysis tool.

Objective 3: Identify a preferred solution

Secondary Goal 2: ***Increase the use of ASSIST by students and counselors.***

Objective 1: Develop and implement marketing/public relations strategies to raise the awareness of ASSIST among students and counselors

Activities to Meet Primary Goal Objectives

Primary Goal 1
Secure broad-based commitment to and support of the mission and vision of Project ASSIST.

Objective 1: ***The ASSIST Board of Directors shall complete and adopt a strategic plan.***

Activity 1: ACS staff will prepare a summary of the plan developed at the retreat for distribution and feedback by the ASSIST Board of Directors.

Who is Responsible: ACS staff

Timeline: September 17, 1996

Budget Implications: No direct costs

Activity 2: The ASSIST Board workgroup shall produce a draft of the strategic plan for distribution and adoption by the ASSIST Board of Directors.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board workgroup

Timeline: October 25, 1996

Budget Implications: No direct costs

Activity 3: The ASSIST Board of Directors will adopt the strategic plan.

Who is Responsible: The ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: November 18, 1996

Budget Implications: Implementation costs for approved plan activities.

Primary Goal 1

Secure broad-based commitment to and support of the mission and vision of Project ASSIST.

Objective 2: ***The ASSIST Board of Directors shall communicate its adoption of the strategic plan to all campuses.***

Activity 1: The ASSIST Board of Directors shall issue a statement to all California Community College, California State University, and University of California campuses regarding the adoption of the strategic plan.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: December 31, 1996

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond minimal costs for mailing

Primary Goal 1

Secure broad-based commitment to and support of the mission and vision of Project ASSIST.

Objective 3: ***CCC/CSU/UC shall issue a statement endorsing Project ASSIST.***

Activity 1: CCC/CSU/UC shall issue a statement to their respective campuses endorsing Project ASSIST.

Who is Responsible: CCC/CSU/UC System-wide Offices

Timeline: January 15, 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond minimal costs for mailing

Primary Goal 1

Secure broad-based commitment to and support of the mission and vision of Project ASSIST.

Objective 4: ***CCC/CSU/UC System-wide offices shall secure individual campus commitment 1) to the concept of ASSIST as the official, statewide repository of California articulation and transfer information; 2) to enter articulation by 4-year universities; and 3) to use ASSIST as an advising tool.***

Activity 1: Define community college "participation criteria." CSU & UC participation criteria will be defined as a component of Primary Goal # 2.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board workgroup draft and ASSIST Board of Directors adopt CC participation criteria

Timeline: Complete by April 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond minimal meeting costs.

Activity 2: Send a letter from the ASSIST Board of Directors to all participants including: 1) an explanation of the participation criteria for each segment (CCC/CSU/UC); 2) request the names of staff who will be responsible for managing ASSIST at the campus; and 3) request the signature of the VP/AVP/AVC overseeing ASSIST as a statement of campus commitment to meeting participation criteria.

Who is Responsible: CCC/CSU/UC System-wide Offices and ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: April 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond minimal costs for the mailing.

Primary Goal 1

Secure broad-based commitment to and support of the mission and vision of Project ASSIST.

Objective 5: ***CCC/CSU/UC shall work jointly to maintain adequate funding for the project.***

Activity 1: The ACS staff shall prepare an analysis of budget needs for the Project based on the activities approved in the Strategic Plan. This analysis will include recommendations for: 1) immediate changes to 1996-97 funding priorities; 2) priorities for 1997-98 funds; and 3) ideas for possible new funding in 1998-99.

Who is Responsible: ACS staff

Timeline: Complete by February 1, 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs

Activity 2: A Budget Change Proposal (BCP) may be drafted for submission as part of 1998 Intersegmental Budget Task Force.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: Present BCP at May 1997 ASSIST Board of Directors meeting; submit to the Intersegmental Budget Task Force.

Budget Implications: No direct costs

Primary Goal 1

Secure broad-based commitment to and support of the mission and vision of Project ASSIST.

Objective 6: ***The ASSIST Board of Directors shall review and revise annually the goals and objectives for the Project as appropriate.***

Activity 1: Annual review and revision of Project goals and objectives as stated in the Strategic Plan.

Who is Responsible: The ASSIST Board workgroup will conduct an initial review of Project goals and objectives and will develop recommendations, for consideration and adoption by the ASSIST Board of Directors.

Timeline: The ASSIST Board workgroup will meet in September each year and develop recommendations for review by the ASSIST Board of Directors at its November meeting.

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond minimal meeting expenses.

Activity 2: The ASSIST Board of Directors will schedule a retreat every two years to update and revise the Project's Strategic Plan.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: Next retreat to be scheduled for July 1998

Budget Implications: $10,000

Primary Goal 1

Secure broad-based commitment to and support of the mission and vision of Project ASSIST.

Objective 7: ***The ASSIST Board of Directors shall clarify and standardize its meeting procedures.***

Activity 1: Refine ASSIST Board of Directors operating procedures as follows:

1) Continue to follow procedures as defined in the Project ASSIST Governance document.

2) Produce, review, and distribute meeting minutes within a specified time period soon after ASSIST Board of Directors meetings

3) Follow an issue/action format at meetings to keep better track of the status of specific issues and reflect this in meeting minutes

4) Establish a standing ASSIST Board workgroup, consisting of one representative from each segmental office and representatives from the ACS, to work on ASSIST Board of Directors issues between semi-annual Board meetings.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: November 18, 1996

Budget Implications: No direct costs.

Primary Goal 2

Establish ASSIST as the official, statewide repository of articulation and transfer information for the state of California.

Objective 1: ***Define the elements and policies of the "official, statewide repository of California articulation and transfer information.***

Activity 1: Schedule a break-out session at the December 4, 1996 ASSIST User Group Meeting to collect information from users in the field about the type and extent of articulation and transfer information that should be contained in the "official, statewide repository".

Who is Responsible: ACS staff, ASSIST Board workgroup.

Timeline: December, 1996

Budget Implications: No direct costs.

Activity 2: Establish an *ad hoc* committee consisting of the ASSIST Board workgroup, 3 articulation officers (one from each segment), and any other appropriate personnel to: a) review comments obtained at the User Group meeting; b) prepare a definition of the "official, statewide repository;" c) circulate this definition to articulation officers and others, as appropriate, for their comment; and d) present to the ASSIST Board of Directors for final approval.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board workgroup.

Timeline: Complete by March 1997

Budget Implications: Travel/meeting expenses for the ASSIST Board workgroup.

Primary Goal 2

Establish ASSIST as the official, statewide repository of articulation and transfer information for the state of California.

Objective 2: ***Adopt the definition of the official, statewide repository of California articulation and transfer information.***

Activity 1: Review and adopt the definition developed under Objective 1 of this Goal section.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: April 1997 via mail and conference call so that this item does not have to wait for the May 1997 ASSIST Board of Directors meeting.

Budget Implications: No direct costs

Primary Goal 2

Establish ASSIST as the official, statewide repository of articulation and transfer information for the state of California.

Objective 3: ***Obtain endorsement by each of the three public postsecondary segments.***

Activity 1: ASSIST Board of Directors brings the issue to the attention of appropriate governing entities of each segment (CCC/CSU/UC) for their review and approval.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board of Directors segmental representatives

Timeline: Complete by July 1, 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs

Primary Goal 2

Establish ASSIST as the official, statewide repository of articulation and transfer information for the state of California.

Objective 4: ***Update and inform all public higher education institutions and other relevant higher education agencies/groups of ASSIST's plans to become the official repository of articulation and transfer information.***

Activity 1: Identify relevant groups and agencies, in addition to all public high education institutions, and determine what method of communication would be most appropriate.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board workgroup

Timeline: Complete by December 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs

Activity 2: Communicate with identified groups and agencies as appropriate.

Who is Responsible: To be determined based on which groups and agencies are involved.

Timeline: Complete by 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond minimal meetings and mailings.

Primary Goal 3

Develop and implement procedures to ensure complete and comprehensive articulation and transfer information in ASSIST.

Objective 1: ***Identify procedures for implementation of a timely, on-going articulation update process.***

Activity 1: Develop specific working procedures for maintaining and updating the ASSIST articulation repository. These procedures should be developed in accordance with the definition of "repository" established under Primary Goal 2, Objective 1, Activity 1. There may need to be separate procedures for the current Revelation-based environment and the new Web-based environment..

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board workgroup, including 3 campus articulation officers (one from each segment) and any other personnel as appropriate as a part of the activities for defining the attributes of the articulation repository. Also include this information in the same review, consultation, and approval process.

Timeline: Complete by March 1997

Budget Implications: Travel/meeting expenses for the ASSIST Board workgroup and other staff.

Primary Goal 3

Develop and implement procedures to ensure complete and comprehensive articulation and transfer information in ASSIST.

Objective 2: ***Ensure all campuses adhere to the procedures.***

Activity 1: Develop a monitoring process for reporting to segmental offices and the ASSIST Board of Directors how campuses are adhering to the related procedures and policies that are being established as part of this Strategic Plan. There may need to be different processes developed for the current Revelation-based environment and the new Web-based environment.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board workgroup will develop a draft proposal and consult with campus staff for review and comment. A final proposal will be submitted to the ASSIST Board of Directors for review and approval.

Timeline: Complete by July 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond minimal meetings and mailings.

Activity 2: Begin implementation of the above mentioned monitoring process.

Who is Responsible: To be established

Timeline: Fall 1997

Budget Implications: To be established

Primary Goal 3

Develop and implement procedures to ensure complete and comprehensive articulation and transfer information in ASSIST.

Objective 3: ***Evaluate the relationship of emerging degree audit implementations to ASSIST to determine commonality for a positive relationship.***

Activity 1: Study representative degree audit implementations at UC, CSU, and CCC campuses and write a report outlining possibilities for integration. Include contact with consortium and MIS personnel as appropriate.

Who is Responsible: TAC & ACS staff

Timeline: June 1997

Budget Implications: Costs for researching campus degree audit implementations (travel, staffing, etc.)

Primary Goal 3

Develop and implement procedures to ensure complete and comprehensive data in ASSIST.

Objective 4: ***Add data to the database from universities who are not entering their own data.***

Activity 1: CSU Chancellor's office to send a letter to non-participating CSU campuses requesting: 1) completion of a form indicating existing articulation to be entered into ASSIST; and 2) coordination with the ACS regarding submission of paper copies of articulation to be entered into ASSIST.

Who is Responsible: CSUCO

Timeline: October 31, 1996

Budget Implications: No direct costs

Activity 2: Data entry of CSU articulation by ACS staff

Who is Responsible: ACS

Timeline: Begin as soon as CSU campuses begin submitting paper copies of articulation. ACS will develop a data entry schedule and provide regular status updates to the Board.

Budget Implications: ACS staffing costs will vary depending upon the total amount of articulation to be entered/updated each year.

Primary Goal 3

Develop and implement procedures to ensure complete and comprehensive articulation and transfer information in ASSIST.

Objective 5: ***Ensure complete submission and entry of all community college course list data.***

Activity 1: Evaluate the potential for use of CCCCO MIS course list data in lieu of colleges submitting data directly to the ACS.

Who is Responsible: ACS & CCCCO staff

Timeline: December 31, 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond minimal meeting costs.

Activity 2: Develop a process for inputting complete community college master course list data into ASSIST.

Who is Responsible: ACS staff or ASSIST Board workgroup depending upon results from Activity 1.

Timeline: March 1998

Budget Implications: No anticipated direct costs

Activity 3: Implement a process for inputting complete community college master course list data into ASSIST.

Who is Responsible: ACS

Timeline: June 1998

Budget Implications: To be determined based on process developed under Activity 2.

Primary Goal 4

Utilize the established Technical Advisory Committee process to implement the Technology Plan to promote universal access to logically centralized applications and data using an open architecture, web browser clients, and modern database management system technology.

Objective 1: ***Adopt a specific database environment.***

Activity 1: Research, review and adopt a specific database environment.

Who is Responsible: ACS, TAC, ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: November 18, 1996

Budget Implications: Initial purchase of database software and annual maintenance fees.

Primary Goal 4

Utilize the established Technical Advisory Committee process to implement the Technology Plan to promote universal access to logically centralized applications and data using an open architecture, web browser clients, and modern database management system technology.

Objective 2: ***Adopt and communicate a web browser as the client for future access to ASSIST.***

Activity 1: Research, review and adopt a specific browser, or class of browsers, for use by customers.

Who is Responsible: ACS, TAC, ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: November 18, 1996

Budget Implications: No direct costs.

Activity 2: Communicate related information to campuses.

Who is Responsible: ACS & TAC

Timeline: February 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond minimal mailing costs. However, there will be costs to some institutions for raising the minimum level of technology for accessing and using ASSIST from the current level.

Primary Goal 4

Utilize the established Technical Advisory Committee process to implement the Technology Plan to promote universal access to logically centralized applications and data using an open architecture, web browser clients, and modern database management system technology.

Objective 3: ***Convert/migrate ASSIST functionality to new environment.***

Activity 1: Follow the ASSIST Software Development Framework process in converting all existing, approved ASSIST functionality and data to the new environment.

Who is Responsible: ACS, TAC, ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: December 31, 1998

Evaluation: The ASSIST Software Development Framework requires specific evaluation components for any project.

Budget Implications: ACS staff to develop and carry-out plans.

Primary Goal 4

Utilize the established Technical Advisory Committee process to implement the Technology Plan to promote universal access to logically centralized applications and data using an open architecture, web browser clients, and modern database management system technology.

Objective 4: ***Assess representative campus-based information systems for linkages with articulation data in ASSIST.***

Activity 1: Identify and study representative campus-based information systems for linkages with ASSIST information in the new environment. Produce a report for the ASSIST Board of Directors on the results of this study.

Who is Responsible: ACS & TAC

Timeline: Complete by December 1998

Budget Implications: Costs for studying campus systems (travel, staffing, etc.)

Activities to Meet Objectives for Secondary Goals

Secondary Goal 1

Assure the availability of a statewide transcript analysis tool by December 1999.

Objective 1: ***Define the requirements for a statewide transcript analysis tool.***

Activity 1: ACS convene a task force of key campus technical and student services representatives to identify the requirements for a transcript analysis tool. Include consultation with MIS groups and college technology consortia.

Who is Responsible: ACS staff & Task Force

Timeline: Convene Task Force in February 1997. Estimate 3 to 4 meetings. Conclude deliberations by May 1, 1997.

Budget Implications: Costs for conducting activities of the Task Force.

Activity 2: Develop a task force report for the ASSIST Board of Directors.

Who is Responsible: ACS & Task Force

Timeline: Complete in time for the May 1997 ASSIST Board of Directors meeting

Budget Implications: No direct costs beyond staffing required to develop materials.

Secondary Goal 1

Assure the availability of a statewide transcript analysis tool by December 1999.

Objective 2: ***Evaluate existing systems against requirements for a statewide transcript analysis tool.***

Activity 1: Identify and study representative systems and provide an evaluation report to the ASSIST Board of Directors.

Who is Responsible: TAC and key campus/system representatives

Timeline: Complete by November 1997 in time for the November 1997 ASSIST Board of Directors meeting

Budget Implications: Costs for TAC personnel to conduct studies of systems.

Secondary Goal 1

Assure the availability of a statewide transcript analysis tool by December 1999.

Objective 3: ***Identify a preferred solution***

Activity 1: Identify a preferred solution based on TAC evaluation information.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board of Directors

Timeline: November 1997

Budget Implications: No direct costs.

Secondary Goal 2

Increase the use of ASSIST by students and counselors.

Objective 1: ***Develop and implement marketing/public relations strategies to raise the awareness of ASSIST among student and counselors.***

Activity 1: Develop a marketing/public relations strategy to raise the awareness of ASSIST among students and counselors.

Who is Responsible: ASSIST Board workgroup with additional campus representation.

Timeline: January 1998

Budget Implications: Meeting costs for campus representatives.

Activity 2: Implement the marketing/public relations strategy developed in Activity 1.

Who is Responsible: To be determined.

Timeline: Begin in Spring 1998

Budget Implications: To be determined.

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

THE California Postsecondary Education Commission is a citizen board established in 1974 by the Legislature and Governor to coordinate the efforts of California's colleges and universities and to provide independent, non-partisan policy analysis and recommendations to the Governor and Legislature.

Members of the Commission

The Commission consists of 17 members. Nine represent the general public, with three each appointed for six-year terms by the Governor, the Senate Rules Committee, and the Speaker of the Assembly. Six others represent the major segments of postsecondary education in California. Two student members are appointed by the Governor.

As of January 1997, the Commissioners representing the general public are:

Jeff Marston, San Diego; *Chair*
Guillermo Rodriguez, Jr., San Francisco; *Vice Chair*
Mim Andelson, Los Angeles
Henry Der, San Francisco
Lance Izumi, San Francisco
Kyo "Paul" Jhin, Malibu
Melinda G. Wilson, Torrance
Vacant
Vacant

Representatives of the segments are:

David S. Lee, Santa Clara; appointed by the Regents of the University of California;

Gerti Thomas, Albany; appointed by the California State Board of Education;

Philip E. del Campo, LaMesa; appointed by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges;

Ted J. Saenger, San Francisco; appointed by the Trustees of the California State University;

Kyhl Smeby, Pasadena; appointed by the Governor to represent California's independent colleges and universities; and

Frank R. Martinez, San Luis Obispo; appointed by the Council for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education.

The two student representatives are:

Stephen R. McShane, San Luis Obispo
John E. Stratman, Jr., Orange

Functions of the Commission

The Commission is charged by the Legislature and Governor to "assure the effective utilization of public postsecondary education resources, thereby eliminating waste and unnecessary duplication, and to promote diversity, innovation, and responsiveness to student and societal needs."

To this end, the Commission conducts independent reviews of matters affecting the 2,600 institutions of postsecondary education in California, including community colleges, four-year colleges, universities, and professional and occupational schools.

As an advisory body to the Legislature and Governor, the Commission does not govern or administer any institutions, nor does it approve, authorize, or accredit any of them. Instead, it performs its specific duties of planning, evaluation, and coordination by cooperating with other State agencies and non-governmental groups that perform those other governing, administrative, and assessment functions.

Operation of the Commission

The Commission holds regular meetings throughout the year at which it debates and takes action on staff studies and takes positions on proposed legislation affecting education beyond the high school in California. By law, its meetings are open to the public. Requests to speak at a meeting may be made by writing the Commission in advance or by submitting a request before the start of the meeting.

The Commission's day-to-day work is carried out by its staff in Sacramento, under the guidance of Executive Director Warren Halsey Fox, Ph.D., who is appointed by the Commission.

Further information about the Commission and its publications may be obtained from the Commission offices at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, California 98514-2938; telephone (916) 445-7933.

PROJECT ASSIST (Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer)

Commission Report 96-9

ONE of a series of reports published by the California Postsecondary Education Commission as part of its planning and coordinating responsibilities. Single copies may be obtained without charge from the Commission at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, California 95814-2938. Recent reports include:

1995

95-16 *Student Profiles, 1995: The Latest in a Series of Annual Factbooks About Student Participation in California Higher Education* (October 1995)

1996

96-1 *California Postsecondary Education Commission Workplan, 1996 Through 2000* (February 1996)

96-2 *Performance Indicators of California Higher Education, 1995: The Second Annual Report to California's Governor, Legislature, and Citizens in Response to Assembly Bill 1808 (Chapter 741, Statutes of 1991)* (February 1996)

96-3 *Changes in College Participation: Promise or Peril? -- Adding the Interstate Dimension: A Report by the California Postsecondary Education Commission Executive Director Warren H. Fox* (February 1996)

96-4 *Progress Report on the Community College Transfer Function: A Report to the Governor and Legislature in Response to Senate Bill 121 (Chapter 1188, Statutes of 1991)* (June 1996)

96-5 *Faculty Salaries at California's Public Universities: A Report to the Governor and Legislature in Response to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 51 (1965)* (June 1996)

96-6 *Moving Forward: A Preliminary Discussion of Technology and Transformation in California Higher Education* (June 1996)

96-7 *Fiscal Profiles, 1996: The Sixth in a Series of Factbooks About the Financing of California Higher Education* (September 1996)

96-8 *Student Profiles, 1996: The Latest in a Series of Annual Factbooks About Student Participation in California Higher Education* (October 1996)

96-9 *Project ASSIST (Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer): Staff Comments on the Final Evaluation Report Prepared by the Carrera Consulting Group* (December 1996)

96-10 *Performance Indicators of California Higher Education, 1996: The Third Annual Report to California's Governor, Legislature, and Citizens in Response to Assembly Bill 1808 (Chapter 741, Statutes of 1991)* (December 1996)